

2025 MEN *of* SUCCESS

Meet some of the region's most influential entrepreneurs and industry leaders.

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SPECIAL PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

TRIATHLON TRIUMPH

HOW FRED SOMMER
TURNED ONE RACE INTO
A SPORTS LEGACY
IN CLERMONT.

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TONY RIZZO'S LEGENDARY COLLECTION

FROM RARE FINDS TO FAMOUS
FACES—STEP INSIDE HIS GOLF
AND SPORTS SHRINE.

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MAN *of the* YEAR •
Scorpio
Visionary behind
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frames of Scorpio
Lamonte Eyewear.
Mosley

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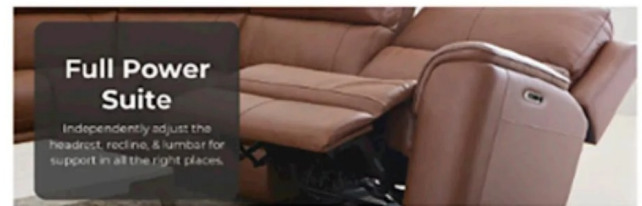
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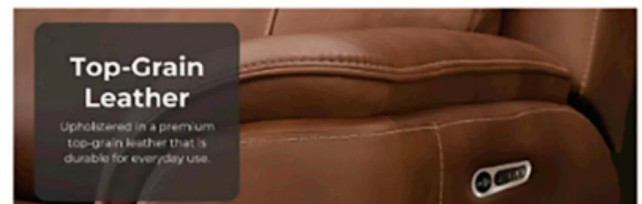
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JUNE'25

V.21 × N.08

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Scorpio Mosley

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making bold moves and
building legacies.

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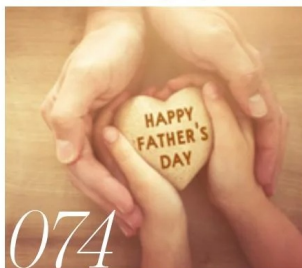
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Lake & Sumter Style
Design: Michael Gualin
Photo: Nicole Hamel
On the Cover: Style's Man of the Year: Scorpio Mosley



Village Edition
Design: Shawnee Coppola
Photo: Nicole Hamel
On the Cover: Chandler Wealth Management

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

The Men Said “Challenge Accepted” and I’m Eating Crow

From hard hats to lab coats, they
brought their A-game.

Well, folks, I’m here to do something I rarely, and I mean rarely, do—I’m admitting I was wrong. Yes, you heard it here first. If you recall a previous publisher’s letter, I may have strongly implied that the men in our business

community were lagging behind the powerhouse women featured in our Businesswomen of **Style** edition. I challenged you all to step up, and ... well, consider me officially schooled. You didn’t just step up; you showed up, loud and clear, in suits, hard hats, lab coats, and everything in between.

This year’s Men of Success feature was nothing short of impressive. From doctors to roofers, real estate brokers to tech wizards, you absolutely crushed it. And trust me, I’m happy to eat a little crow if it means showcasing the incredible talent and drive of the men in our community. Bravo, gentlemen!

Now, allow me to shine the spotlight where it truly belongs. Our 2025 **Style Magazine** MAN OF THE YEAR is none other than Scorpio Mosley. Scorpio is the

epitome of versatility and success, balancing entrepreneurship, public speaking and a killer eyewear collection that embodies style and sophistication. He’s the kind of person who inspires others not just to think big but to look sharp while doing it. Congratulations, Scorpio — you’ve shown us what being ‘The Man’ really means!

And how could we forget this year’s reverse drawing event? Watching the Men of Success network like pros, strike deals and build relationships was a thing of beauty. You didn’t just mingle; you made moves. And that’s what this is all about—not just celebrating success but creating connections that fuel it.

Look, I’ll admit being wrong isn’t my favorite thing, but in this case, I couldn’t be prouder. The men of our community have proven themselves to be movers, shakers and game-changers. Keep making waves, gentlemen—we’ll be here to cheer you on (and maybe give you a little grief along the way).

Until next month,

Kendra



Have a story to tell?

We’re always looking for stories about people who live and work in our area.
Send suggestions to editorial@akersmediagroup.com.

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What is Palliative Radiation?

PAID PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

Palliative care may be provided at any point during cancer care, from diagnosis to the end of life. When a person receives palliative care, they may continue to receive cancer treatment.

Palliative cancer care is not meant to cure, but to relieve pain and alleviate symptoms caused by the disease or by other cancer treatments. Palliative radiation is commonly used to reduce tumor size or provide relief from pain, bleeding, or obstructions. It can be used with other treatments meant to cure, but it can improve quality of life especially for patients whose cancers cannot be cured. In recent years, some studies have shown that including palliative care soon after an advanced cancer diagnosis can improve a person's quality of life and mood, and may even prolong survival.

How is palliative radiation used at RBOI?

1. To shrink tumors. In bone cancer, palliative radiation can result in less extensive surgery, often preserving the arm or leg. Slowing tumor growth in stomach cancer can help treat eating problems. In esophageal cancer and lung cancer, it can ease symptoms in people who have trouble swallowing or breathing. Likewise, it can relieve blockages in bladder cancer and in colorectal cancer and can reduce swelling in uterine cancer. Palliative radiation can also ease symptoms caused by lymphoma that has spread

to internal organs, or when a tumor causes pain by pressing on nerves. It may be used as a form of urgent treatment in children with symptoms caused by large tumors in the chest.

2. To relieve bleeding.

Palliative radiation can relieve bleeding problems caused by tumors in many cancers, among them head and neck, esophageal, lung, stomach, bladder, kidney, colorectal, penile, cervical, uterine, and anal cancers.

3. To relieve pain.

Palliative radiation can reduce the pressure that tumors exert on bones, nerves, and internal organs.

4. To slow or relieve cancer's spread.

Palliative radiation can reduce symptoms when tumors have spread to the bones, brain, or internal organs, such as in lymphoma and in head and neck, breast, lung, kidney, prostate, skin, and other cancers.

5. To use when other treatments aren't possible.

In cancers such as those of the pancreatic and biliary system and others, palliative radiation can help relieve symptoms (such as pain) in people with advanced cancers or in people who aren't healthy enough for other treatments like surgery.

by the numbers

1895

German physicist Wilhelm Conrad Roentgen discovers X-rays

1974

First use of the term "palliative care," by Dr. Balfour Mount, surgical oncologist at the Royal Victoria Hospital and McGill University in Montreal

2014

First ever global resolution, issued by the World Health Assembly (governing body of the World Health Organization), calling for improved access to palliative care as a core component of health systems

Palliative Care is Different from Hospice Care

Palliative care is often associated with end of life, but it can begin at any point during cancer treatment. In addition to preventing or treating symptoms and side effects of cancer and its treatment, palliative care addresses related psychological, social, and spiritual issues. Anyone can receive palliative care regardless of their age or stage of disease.

In contrast, hospice care begins when the sole focus is quality of life. To help patients and their loved ones make the transition from treatment meant to cure or control cancer to hospice care, palliative care can:

- prepare patients for physical changes that may occur near the end of life,
- help patients cope with emotional issues that arise, and
- provide support for family members and caregivers.

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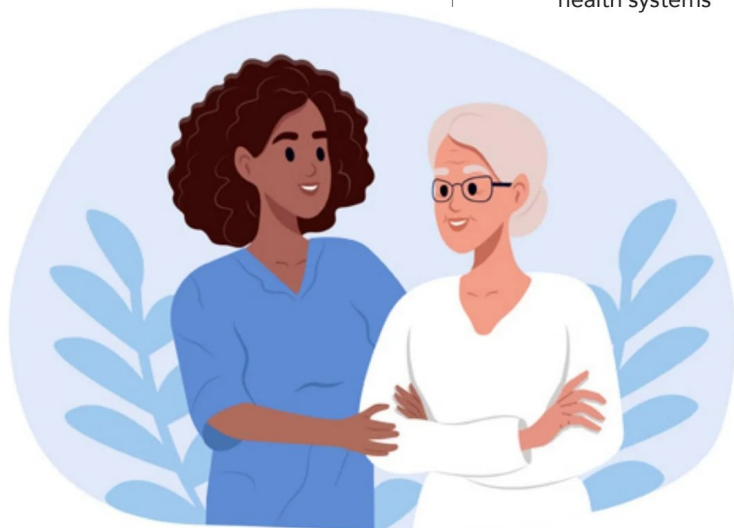
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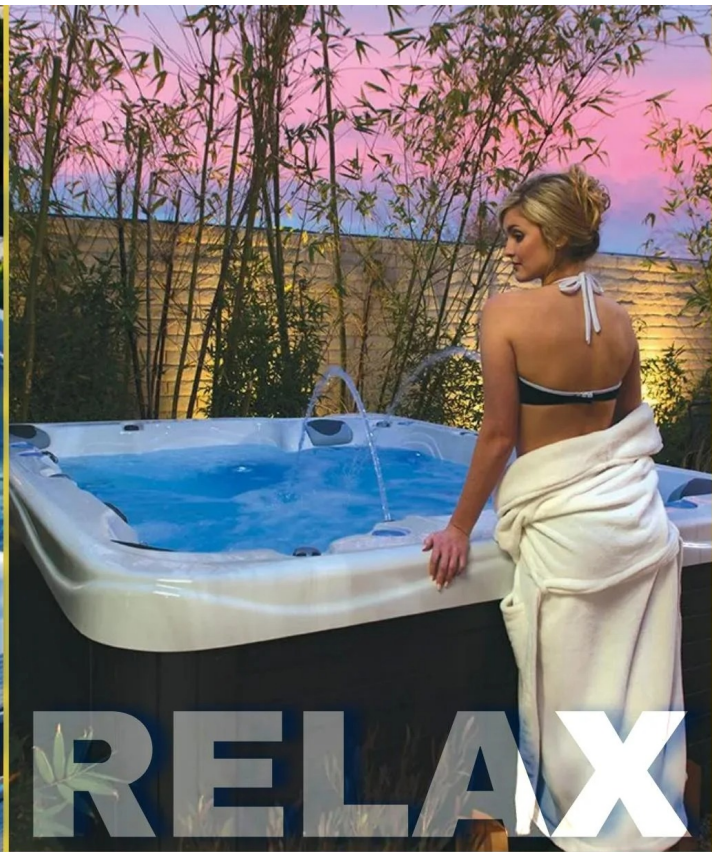
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Running clubs, snapping pics, spreading good—Montverde's Cadence Whitehouse is everywhere and somehow still ahead of the game

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TO YOUR CORE: Did you know that Pilates enhances flexibility, core strength, posture, mobility and balance while reducing injury risk? It also boosts mental well-being by lowering stress, improving mood and increasing body awareness. Additional benefits include better pain management, improved body composition and enhanced functional movement, making Pilates a powerful practice for both physical and mental health. It's great for seniors and those who have problems with balance due to injury.

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BACK SUPPORT:

Orlando Health has launched the Orlando Health Spine Center, the only program in Florida combining orthopedic and neurosurgical specialists focused solely on spine care. With 16 locations across Central Florida, including seven walk-in clinics, the center offers same-day appointments and personalized treatment plans ranging from physical therapy to advanced surgery. Built on the expertise of Orlando Health Jewett Orthopedic Institute and Neuroscience Institute, this multidisciplinary program delivers faster diagnoses, better outcomes and compassionate care for patients with back and spine issues.



A FLORIDA FIRST: On June 25, 1845, William Dunn Moseley was sworn in as Florida's first Governor under statehood. A strong supporter of agriculture, states' rights and public education, Moseley led during a time of growth and change.

SQUEEZE THE DAY: Downtown Leesburg just got a whole lot cooler! Lemmy's Gourmet Italian Ice & Sorbet is the newest sweet spot in town, serving up refreshing, handcrafted flavors just in time for summer. With a cheerful lemon mascot and a menu full of frosty favorites, it's the perfect place to chill. Whether you're a local or just passing through, now you've got another delicious reason to treat yourself downtown!

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JAZZY JUNE: Spend an unforgettable evening at Jazz in Venetian Gardens featuring Omari Dillard, the renowned "Soul Violinist." This 21-and-up event promises smooth vibes, soulful sounds and scenic views under the stars. Enjoy delicious food by Ponder's Personal Chef Service for a perfect night out for jazz lovers and anyone seeking a little rhythm and relaxation.

1 Dozier Circle, Leesburg. For details call 352.728.9885.

GO, DADDY: T.E.A.M. Dad is a program designed to teach, empower, advocate for and mentor men to become the fathers their children need. Many new dads feel uncertain about their role, especially during and after pregnancy. Through education, training, and support, T.E.A.M. Dad helps fathers become engaged, responsible parents. The program focuses on parenting, child development, personal growth, healthy relationships and economic stability. To participate, contact your Florida Healthy Start Coalition or call 855.889.1090.



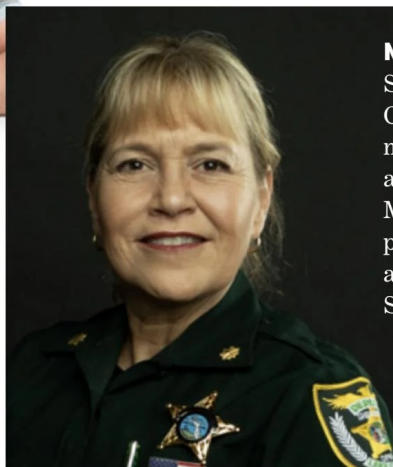
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TRACES OF THE PAST: The legacy of the Timucua Native American tribe that lived in Florida and Georgia for thousands of years lives on through cultural preservation efforts here in Lake County. The Timucua tribe was the largest indigenous group in the region when Europeans arrived, with a population near 200,000. They spoke several dialects of the Timucua language and worshipped the sun, moon and other deities. Their diet included farmed crops, hunted game and fish. They lived in palm-frond huts or circular thatched houses and wore decorative clothing. The Timucua Trail is located in the Ocala National Forest.



KIND MELON: June is the perfect time of year to enjoy local melons. Fresh cantaloupe, watermelon and honeydew are just some of the Cucumis melo family that thrive on local farms. The sweet, fleshy fruit is full of natural hydration, low in sodium and saturated fat, and packed with fiber and vitamins A and C. The term "melon" can apply to both the plant and its fruit, and you can find them at local farmer's markets or fruit stands all summer.



MAJOR NEWS: The Lake County Sheriff's Office has promoted Capt. Christie Mysinger to the rank of Major, making her the first female in the agency's history to hold this position. Mysinger has been a law enforcement pioneer since 1991 when she took an assignment with the Sumter County Sheriff's Office as an undercover officer at a local school at just 19 years old. Congratulations Major Mysinger!

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'CART' BLANCHE: June 13 is National Golf Cart Day, which will surely be celebrated in The Villages, where an estimated 70,000-80,000 of these cost-cutting vehicles – many of them customized – buzz daily along streets and nearly 100 miles of golf cart paths on 57 golf courses. Many residents use them for errands, social outings and even parades. Homes often include special "golf car" garages in this uniquely mobile community. Electric models are becoming more popular, offering a quieter, eco-friendly way to navigate the many destinations. 🌱





PEOPLE

Maitland Keller

Overcoming childhood hardship, Royal native becomes a trailblazing community activist.

STORY: CINDY PETERSON × PHOTO: NICOLE HAMEL

My childhood: I had to stop school to help take care of my younger siblings. My dad died when I was 8 or 9 years old. At the age of 12, my parents moved their house from my father's parents' land to my mom's parents' 80-acre parcel of land in Royal. It wasn't an easy task. After all that, I had to move away from my beloved community to make a living, picking oranges.

A fun fact: I have always worked well with my hands. Also, I love Steve Harvey. I will watch him all day and all night.

On life's journey: After I moved to Apopka to pick oranges, I met a group of Catholic sisters who were concerned about farm and migrant workers, especially their health care. After helping to establish the Apopka Clinic, I asked if they would do the same for my people in Sumter County. Thus, Project Health was formed, later renamed to Thomas E. Langley Medical Center.

Building a legacy: I was the first African American appointed to serve on the Board of the West Orange Farmer's Clinic. I was

able to bring similar services to my community. We arranged for the Apopka Clinic employees to come to Sumter and train the new employees. We sold fried fish and chicken dinners as fundraisers to help fund the Sumter Clinic in its early days. Today, the Langley E. Medical Center has five locations. Just imagine that as a child, I had to drop out of school.

I want everyone to know: Today, I live on that 80-acre parcel that once belonged to my mom's family in my historic community of Royal and I love it. Royal was formed in 1865 at the end of the Civil War and my people kept the land. With its 3,501-acre boundaries and so much historical significance, my work is to help preserve it, which is why my associations are all in Royal.

Recognitions: I have many awards including from Retired Congresswoman

Ginny Brown-Waite House of Representative 2009 Congressional Record, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast of The Villages, Community of Royal, MLK Commemorative Committee of Lake & Sumter Counties, Young Performing Artists, Catholic Sisters of Apopka and the Thomas E. Langley Medical Center.

A saying I live by: Keep doing the right thing and you will be blessed. Also, honor your elders. 🙏

VITAL STATS

- Born & Raised in Royal, FL
- Has 5 children
- Established Project Health
- Volunteer for Young Performing Artists



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CINDY PETERSON

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PEOPLE

CADENCE WHITEHOUSE

Shutterbug. Service star. Student leader. She does it all—and makes it look easy.

STORY: ROXANNE BROWN × PHOTO: NICOLE HAMEL

VITAL STATS

- 18 years old
- Born and raised in Clermont
- Family: Mom, dad, younger sister Claire, four cats and a hamster
- Montverde Academy graduate (May 2025)



Favorite school subjects: Journalism and photography.

My love for photography began when: I took a photography class back in 10th grade and started helping my teacher out with sporting events on campus. From there my passion grew and as Montverde Academy's lead student photographer, I've loved capturing moments that last a lifetime.

During my time at Montverde Academy: I founded my own public speaking club, I was swim team manager, past lacrosse team manager, Montverde Academy Eagle Ambassador (tour guide), lead student sports photographer and Key Club Division 9B Lieutenant Governor.

Graduation accolades: I was presented with the Key Club Leader of the Leaders award; I am now a two-time Robert F. Lucas Distinguished Lieutenant Governor recipient and my senior superlative was "most involved."

Besides photography, I enjoy: Graphic design and volunteering. I have more than 1,000 community service hours.

One of my greatest personal achievements: Being elected to serve as the Division 9B Lieutenant Governor for the Florida District of Key Club International. This opportunity has really shaped me into the leader I am today and I have grown

so much since stepping into this role two years ago.

I've continued as a member of Key Cub because: I love the work I do. Being able to build the bridge between the South Lake County schools I work with, and the Florida District is such an honor, and I hold it so close to my heart . . . connecting everyone with a love for service means everything to me.

College goals: I will be attending Florida Atlantic University and studying multimedia journalism with a double minor in public relations and sports studies.

I look up to: My Key Club Zone Administrators Cleve and Deborah Tinsley are my biggest influences. Since I started Key Club, they've always motivated me to reach for the stars and be myself. They've given me life lessons that I'll always hold onto, and they have shaped me into the leader I am today.

Three words I would choose to describe myself: Motivated. Driven. Hardworking.

Favorite food: Italian.

Top song/artist on your playlist: My music taste is all over the place.

Best advice to my younger self: Everything will work out in the end.

Best advice to others: Get involved! Getting involved in your community can change your life; I know it changed mine. 🙌

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LEVELED UP

Chandler Wealth is raising the bar on what it means to plan well.

PAID PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

After years in Lady Lake, Chandler Wealth has officially settled into its brand-new, custom-designed office in Wildwood—and they're inviting the community to stop in and see what makes this new space so special. "We didn't just move into something

bigger—we built it out exactly the way we wanted," says Chandler Wealth VP Kathy Gentile. "This space is around 1,700 square feet and gives us the room we need to serve clients better, with dedicated areas for conferences, private consultations, and now, even an attorney's office on-site."

That attorney is Nathan Workman, who recently joined the Chandler Wealth team full-time as an on-site attorney and chief strategist. His presence has already made a difference.

"Having Nathan here makes everything smoother," Kathy explains. "If a client needs a trust, will, or has a legal question, we can sit down right away and get it done. There's no delay."

Nathan, an experienced attorney with a strong background in tax and estate planning, has worked

with Chandler Wealth and its clients for years in a consulting role. Now that he's officially part of the team, clients benefit from more integrated, personalized advice—especially when it comes to the complex intersection of wealth, taxes and legacy planning.

"The term 'fiduciary' gets thrown around a lot these days, but what clients really need is someone who can look at their whole picture," Nathan says. "Good planning isn't just about investment returns. It's about tax efficiency, asset protection and making sure everything works together holistically."

That kind of comprehensive approach is exactly what Chandler Wealth is known for. Under the leadership of founder and financial planner Craig Chandler, the firm has built its reputation on individualized service and high-touch client relationships.

In April, the entire team celebrated those successes by hosting an open house, complete with tours, food, refreshments, music and time with their clients.

"We were thrilled to welcome people into our new space," Chandler says about their recent event. "It was a beautiful day and a great moment to share what we've been working on. We've put in a lot of effort to make

this office a welcoming place for our clients."

The move to Wildwood wasn't just about size—it was about functionality. The previous office, while familiar, was limited in layout and flexibility. Now, the Chandler Wealth team can offer clients a more collaborative, comfortable environment to explore all aspects of their financial lives—from retirement planning and estate design to tax strategies and wealth transfer.

In addition to financial and estate planning, Chandler Wealth's services include investment management, tax-efficient withdrawal strategies, and multi-generational planning. And now, with a legal expert on-site, clients can also address legal concerns directly within the same team—saving time, reducing stress, and improving outcomes.

"We want people to feel like this is their financial home," Kathy adds. "Whether they're longtime clients or just curious about what we offer, we'd love for them to come in and talk with us about their needs."



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FUELED BY FAITH FRAMED BY PURPOSE

STORY: CYNTHIA MCFARLAND X PHOTOS: NICOLE HAMEL

If there's one thing Scorpio Mosley doesn't lack, it's confidence.

In some men, self-assurance can come across as brash, but Scorpio's conviction is tempered by kindness and compassion.

The 2025 *Style Magazine* Man of the Year is not only successful in business but considers it his mission to inspire hope in others.

Whether it's growing his company or speaking to a group, his dedication and wisdom are difference makers.

"It ultimately comes down to five key elements that I refer to as my Fab Five: faith, family, fitness, finance and fashion. I constantly find myself engaging with one or more of these daily," says Scorpio, who has made it a point to center his life around those priorities.

SOLID START

Born in Gainesville, Florida, Scorpio grew up in the tiny town of Lawtey and graduated from Bradford High in 1992.

He attended college at Sante Fe and then the University of Central

Florida, majoring in business with a minor in marketing.

"I figured I'd use my business degree to navigate corporate America. That was going well, but I found you had to wait for your turn and that it's not as much based on merit as I'd like it to be," Scorpio observes.

Scorpio made his way into insurance sales, found his skill set and realized there was good money to be made helping people find the coverage they needed.

"Sales is about building relationships, not just moving product," he says, noting that genuinely caring for people has been at the heart of his success in the insurance industry.

By the way, "Scorpio" is his given name, not a clever marketing ploy.

"My name has always been a point of interest and people wonder where it came from," he says.

When his mother was pregnant with him, her friend, Miss Jessie, announced that she thought the baby would be a boy.

"My mom said, 'If you're right, you can name him.' So, Miss Jessie is the one who came up with my name, but I never got to meet her because she moved away when I was young," Scorpio recalls.

As a kid, Scorpio Lamonte Mosley wasn't thrilled about having an unusual name. The last thing he wanted was to stand out for that reason, so he started going by his middle name.

"When I was in second grade, I identified myself as Lamonte

**FROM EYEWEAR TO INSPIRATION,
SCORPIO MOSLEY HELPS OTHERS
SEE WHAT'S POSSIBLE.**



because I was embarrassed by Scorpio. All these people I grew up with didn't know Scorpio was my name," he says.

"When I was 24, I started using my real name. At that point I was confident enough to start using it. A lot of people didn't believe it was my real name until I showed them my license," he smiles. "I love the name now. People never forget it, so it makes introductions and conversation so much easier."

BUILDING HIS BRAND

Scorpio was definitely successful over almost two decades in the insurance industry, but he wanted more. A practical need ended up opening a door he chose to walk through.

"Back in 2014, I was looking for glasses for myself to change my look and really couldn't find a brand that spoke to me. I looked into getting some custom frames and the more research I did, the more I realized there was a niche not addressed. Once I found that out, this was my opportunity. That was my lane," he says.

That same year, he launched Scorpio Lamonte, LLC, to offer a brand of eyewear that not only fits properly but is also stylish and elegant.

"When I was looking for eyewear, many frames were too narrow, which is what sent me down this path to find wider frames. Many styles are more functional than fashionable, so I wanted to be able to have wider frames that are also fashionable," he notes.

He was adamant about offering frames that would fit wider faces while also making a style statement. He knew from his own search that it was important to have high-quality products that would hold up and not lose shape or integrity.

Back in 2014, I was looking for glasses for myself to change my look and really couldn't find a brand that spoke to me. I looked into getting some custom frames and the more research I did, the more I realized there was a niche not addressed.



As he built Scorpio Lamonte Eyewear, he encountered challenges while trying to get his products into large optical stores and private ophthalmologist offices. Fortunately, in the 21st century, a completely online business makes sense, so he adopted that concept.

Ever proactive, Scorpio reached out and made his brand known,

succeeding in putting his eyewear on the faces of celebrities, such as former NBA players like John Salley, Cuttino Mobley, and former NFL player/ESPN personality Marcus Spears. Securing partnerships with entities like Ice Cube's BIG3 basketball league expanded awareness of Scorpio's company.

The eyewear business isn't his only career, but he's proud of the fact that Scorpio Lamonte Eyewear has grown to be self-sustaining.

FAMILY MATTERS

Scorpio and his wife Lynn have been together since 2004 and celebrate their 13th wedding anniversary this year.

He has two daughters from a previous relationship — Princess, 26, and Raven, 22. Scorpio and Lynn have two daughters together, Serenity, 11, and Harmony, 4.

"I'm a girl dad for sure," he grins.

Spending time together is a priority for the Mosley family. "You've got to have balance," Scorpio says, adding that some of their favorite activities together include time in the pool of their Clermont home, at theme parks and the beach.

He thrives on "just seeing smiles on their faces," at home, in business and as a mentor and motivational speaker.

"It all comes back to who I am at my core, which is pouring into other people," he says.

He made his debut as a motivational speaker in 2024 when a friend hosting a women's conference had a cancellation and asked Scorpio to speak.

"I started thinking about how I was raised by a single mother and vacillated between two households led by loving, yet strong-willed grandmothers. How my teachers and the professors who had the most impact on me scholastically

were women. I'm also a girl dad, so I thought, 'I've been preparing my whole life for this,'" recalls Scorpio. "This was the genesis of my motivational speaking."

On stage that day, he spoke about the power of women and the impact they have on our lives.

"We view men as the most dominant of the species, but women are really the most powerful," Scorpio says.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, which assured him that his speaking appearance wouldn't be a one-time gig.

Since then he's grown his platform as Hope Elevation with Scorpio Lamonte, focusing on both mentorship and public speaking.

INSPIRATION TO SHARE

Whether he's talking about faith, family, fashion, finance or fitness, Scorpio's life experiences fuel his ability to speak truth. The family attends Real Life Church in Clermont. Scorpio's favorite fitness routine is cycling, but he's also a runner.

"I always try to explore personal growth and development," he notes.

Now 50, Scorpio is proud of those five decades of life and he looks forward to sharing what he's learned to influence others.

Scorpio believes that giving back and sharing hope are especially vital for young people.

He is a mentor with Take Stock in Children for Lake County and often speaks for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He is also chairman of the board at The Way Academy, a Christ-centered private school in Minneola, where he regularly speaks to students during chapel.

Owning a business has been a journey and learning experience, but he's enjoyed every step of the

process. But being a business owner is not what defines him.

"My goal is to lean into my passions. I'm at a point in life now where I truly understand I have a lot to give. I love that I'm in a place where I can tell my story so others can find theirs," Scorpio says.

No matter what demographic he's speaking to, Scorpio emphasizes that we have the power to turn things around.

"We all have the ability to make the right decisions when our back is against the wall. It's just about taking action real time. I want to inspire people to take steps toward self-improvement," he says. "Each day when you make decisions, you're creating momentum. They either uplift you or lead you in a less favorable direction. It's important to be mindful of the decisions you make."

Scorpio has built an eyewear company based on the belief that people shouldn't have to compromise between style and comfort. And his conviction extends far beyond entrepreneurial vision and eyeglass frames.

He is passionate about helping people find their own success despite roadblocks life throws their way.

Call him purpose driven. Call him ambitious. But most of all, call him hopeful.

"My favorite Bible verse is Romans 12:12: 'Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.' This verse always centers me," Scorpio says. "You must hold onto hope; it's your lifeline that prevents you from giving up." 🙏

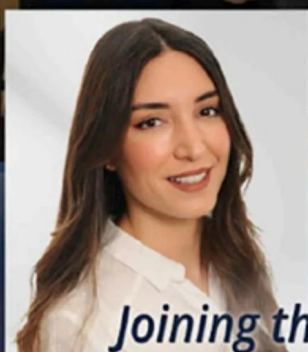
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MEN OF SUCCESS 2025

PHOTOS: NICOLE HAMEL

They hustle, lead and never settle. Across industries, these local businessmen don't follow trends—they set them, driving change and making an impact every day.

SPECIAL PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

JUNE '25 · LAKEANDSUMTERSTYLE.COM / 035



MEN OF SUCCESS 2025

isaac

D E A S

As a licensed mental health counselor, pastor and founder of Deas Consulting in Tavares, Rev. Dr. Isaac Deas is dedicated to guiding individuals through life's challenges—from anxiety and addiction to family issues and personal trauma. But for Isaac, healing doesn't end in the counseling room.

Through New Bethel Community Church in Summerfield where he pastors, he partners with two local organizations making a profound impact. SoZo Kids, a help agency founded more than 30 years ago, serves children living in the Ocala National Forest—many of whom have never slept in a bed or owned basic necessities. Helping Hands provides shelter and restoration for young women recovering from sex trafficking.

Isaac urges the community to be more aware, less judgmental: "Sometimes people just need a pair of socks, a toothbrush, or someone to believe in them." Whether by volunteering, listening or donating small items, he believes anyone can help. "Before judging, ask what someone's been through. Our mission should be to offer hope, not condemnation."

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With years of experience treating patients safely and honestly, they've earned a reputation for natural yet powerful results. "We're not fighting

aging—we're reducing its burden," says Dr. Soares, VIP's double board-certified Facial Plastic Surgeon. "Seeing a familiar version of yourself in the mirror again—it's more than cosmetic. It's powerful. It changes how you feel inside," according to Larry Blevins, PA, who was recently named Medical Aesthetic Provider of the year.

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MEN OF SUCCESS 2025

brett

BRADFORD

ESQUIRE

As a proud fifth-generation Floridian, Brett Bradford brings deep roots and a strong sense of purpose to Bradford Law PLLC. He founded his practice in Leesburg with a clear goal: to provide trusted, accessible legal support to individuals and families across Central Florida.

Bradford Law focuses on probate and estate planning, guiding clients through wills, trusts, estates and probate matters with clarity and compassion. He serves Lake, Sumter, Marion and Orange counties.

Known for his approachable demeanor and client-first approach, Brett offers mobile services, meeting clients at their home, office or another convenient location. His practice is intentionally small, with low overhead to keep services affordable without sacrificing quality.

Whether helping someone navigate the legal complexities of a loved one's estate or planning for the future with peace of mind, Brett brings professionalism, care and established regional insight to every case.

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At CSL Construction in Minneola, founder and CEO Corey Lance has built a company known as a foremost local expert in water and fire damage restoration, mold remediation and full-scale construction. What sets CSL apart is its focus on smart technology and efficient systems. Always ahead of the curve, Corey continually looks for new tools and innovations that improve performance without sacrificing quality. The company continues to grow while remaining flexible, responsive and client-focused.

Along with his wife and business partner Stephanie, Corey has created a workplace culture built on trust, mentorship and long-term growth. Employees are encouraged to sharpen their skills and pursue professional development through programs like sales training and leadership coaching.

For Corey, success also means making time for a quality family life. "Our ultimate purpose is to find time together," he says. "Whether it's showing up for our kids' school events or planning for a future where we can live and work remotely, our ultimate goal is to design a life well lived."



CSLCONSTRUCTION



omar

C O N T R E R A S

Omar Contreras, the owner of Omar's Painting, Inc., provides professional residential and commercial painting throughout Lake, Sumter and Marion counties. From interior refreshes to full exterior transformations, he brings care, precision and a hands-on approach to every job. Omar doesn't just manage the company. He truly loves to be out there painting alongside his crew, ensuring quality from start to finish.

He also considers his life and business a blessing. Eighteen years ago, after his pastor shared a prophecy about his future in painting, Omar printed business cards. Within a week, he had a job and five referrals. Now, he's booked two months in advance.

Brandy, his wife of twenty-two years and their sons, Omar Jr. and Levi, are his daily motivation. "It's not hard when God is on your side," he says. "My work is guided by faith and done with intention. We love to see the change and the joy our company brings to people."



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dave

CASAMONA

Dave Casamona never set out to build a wellness destination. But after he and his wife, Alisha, moved their horses onto a quiet piece of land on Lake Seneca in Eustis, things began to shift. "It just happened organically," Dave says. "We kept adding adjacent property, and it started to become something more."

Today, Redbird Cottage & Farm is a peaceful 7-acre retreat that blends nature, horses and healing. Guests can book the lakeside cottage or cabin online and unwind with fishing, kayaking, birdwatching, watching the horses graze or register for Wellness Horsemanship, a program designed for anyone seeking peace, clarity or personal growth.

"There's just something special about the land; it almost speaks to you," Dave says. "Guests sometimes extend their stay because they don't want to leave."

The farm's name—based on the belief that when you see a red bird, it's a sign that angels are near—honors Alisha's late father John, whose passing in 2021 from COVID inspired their move.

"That's what this place is—it's a healing space we were meant to create and share," Dave adds.

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armor

R O O F I N G

Armor Roofing in Leesburg has built its reputation on experience, reliability and strong relationships. With more than 40 years of combined expertise in the roofing and home improvement industries, the team at Armor understands that a roof isn't just protection from the elements, it's peace of mind. They specialize in residential, commercial and new construction roofing, offering everything from small repairs to full replacements. Whether it's asphalt shingles, tile, metal, flat or modified bitumen systems, every project is handled with skill and attention to detail. Their technicians work closely with homeowners and contractors alike, making sure every roof meets local codes and exceeds expectations. The process is streamlined to reduce stress and delays, keeping clients informed from the first inspection to the final cleanup.

Beyond roofing, Armor also handles drywall repair and structural fixes tied to roof damage, offering clients a one-stop solution for home restoration. Locally owned and operated, Justin and Bobby take pride in serving the Central Florida community with honesty and integrity. Their deep understanding of Florida's unpredictable weather gives them an edge when it comes to long-lasting results. The Armor Roofing crew treats every home like their own, showing up on time, doing the job right and cleaning up when they're done. They know that no one wants to deal with a roof problem twice, and their goal is to make sure their honored customers won't have to. Whether you're patching a small leak or building from the ground up, Armor Roofing delivers dependable service backed by years of hands-on experience. For quality you can trust and a team that stands by its work, Armor Roofing is your number one choice in Central Florida.



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Specializing in underground fire protection and full-site development, Legends delivers

reliable, high-quality solutions with a relationship-first approach. Services include fire line installation, leak detection, site preparation, civil construction, concrete and asphalt work, water and sewer line installation, and stormwater management. We also offer a full range of repair, replacement, testing, and certification services to keep your underground fire protection systems fully operational and code compliant. From the first handshake to the final inspection, Legends brings generations of pride, performance, and commitment to every project.

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rob bell

VP OF SALES

brandon drawdy

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For nearly 20 years, Quan Nguyen has built a name synonymous with excellence across Lake, Orange and Sumter counties as an A/C contractor. As the sole owner of Duct-Man Mechanical, success began with H.V.A.C. (Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning) – but it didn't end there. His entrepreneurial drive has fueled passion projects in homebuilding, philanthropy, mentoring local youth and helping others succeed.

"A lot of people define success as the amount of money you have or the stuff you can accumulate," Quan says. "I used to. But now, to me, success is having good health. And having the health at 42 years old to join the U.S. Air Force – that's the ULTIMATE FLEX."

In July, Quan will leave for basic training, becoming one of the oldest enlistees to join the U.S. Air Force without a waiver. He signed up just hours before his 42nd birthday, the new age cutoff for civilian recruits.

A devoted husband to his wife Tiffany and father to Ronin, Alexis and Ty-Bryant, Quan is proud to serve both his community and country. His oldest son Ty will help manage operations along with his brother-in-law Tim, while Quan fulfills a lifelong dream in uniform.



MEN OF SUCCESS 2025



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C H E S S A R I

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jeremy

C O O N

J.C. got his start in the motorcycle world at just 16 years old, working for a local dealership and soaking up everything he could about the industry. By 18, he was already buying real estate, showing a mindset far beyond his years. At 23, he took a leap and founded Lucky U Cycles—a bold move that would grow into one of Florida's largest and most respected pre-owned motorcycle dealerships. With a relentless drive, a loyal customer base, and a deep love for two wheels, J.C. built more than a business—he built a community. Known for throwing massive events, raising thousands for local charities, and moving serious inventory, he leads by example with hustle, heart, and authenticity. Today, Lucky U Cycles isn't just a dealership—it's a destination. And J.C. is still riding hard, always looking for the next opportunity, never slowing down.



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MEN OF **SUCCESS** 2025

joe ciceri
CEO

tristan ciceri
VICE PRESIDENT

electrical

WORKS

"Electrical Works started small—just me, a vision, a pickup truck, a dining room table and my wife Sabrina. It was right before the market crashed in 2008," recalls founder and president Joe Ciceri.

Today, Electrical Works is licensed in over 25 states, employs over 80 people and is known for high-quality, safety-focused electrical contracting. But Joe says the real success lies in the people.

"We don't just hire—we invest in people," he says. "Our team members grow with us and we make sure they know they're valued."

Joe helped launch Lake-Sumter State College's four-year electrical apprenticeship program, offering students hands-on training and real job pathways. Electrical Works is the founding partner and remains a major sponsor.

But the Ciceri family's commitment to community doesn't end there. Joe and Sabrina recently opened Immunity Health Spa, a brand-new world class spa and wellness center in Leesburg dedicated to holistic health.

"It's a natural extension of our values—taking people's well-being to heart," Joe says.

Since joining in 2016, Joe's son Tristan, now vice president, has earned his licenses in over 25 states and has helped Electrical Works scale nationally. "We specialize in RV and mobile home parks," Tristan explains. "Clients that started with us here locally and have continued to trust us with their properties nation-wide count on us to keep their communities up and running rain or shine."

Now, Electrical Works is expanding into telecommunications. "We're launching a new division focused on communications infrastructure for companies like Spectrum and Comcast," Tristan says. "It's a big step, but we're ready. Our reputation for precision and reliability carries over naturally."

The company also continues to serve commercial clients, local municipalities and airports. But despite national reach, the core values remain the same.

"We don't take shortcuts. If we can't do it right, we don't do it," Tristan says. "Professionalism, integrity and a strong culture—that's what sets us apart."

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MEN OF SUCCESS 2025

scorpio

M O S L E Y

Scorpio first built his name through an elegant, signature collection of eyewear. But today, his influence stretches far beyond fashion.

"I actually evolved my company into more of a brand," he explains. "Now everything is under Scorpio Lamonte." That brand includes Scorpio Lamonte Eyewear and his growing platform for mentorship and public speaking, Hope Elevation with Scorpio Lamonte.

What started as a one-time favor—stepping in as a keynote speaker at a women's conference—became a life-defining moment. "I spoke about the power women possess, often unseen but deeply felt. The feedback was overwhelming," he recalls.

Since then, Scorpio's words and wisdom have resonated with students, professionals, and communities across Lake County and beyond. Through Hope Elevation, he speaks on topics ranging from fashion and finance to faith and personal growth. He's also a mentor with Take Stock in Children and serves on the board of a Christian academy.

Meanwhile, Scorpio Lamonte Eyewear continues to thrive as a stylish extension of his identity—distinct, confident and always ready for the spotlight.

"We all have an innate power to achieve—we just need to embrace it," he says.

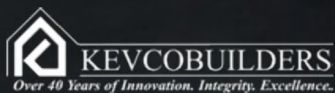
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ian

KANESHIGE

Ian Kaneshige believes great construction starts with great relationships. Since 2023 under his leadership, the Lake County-based company continues its decades-long reputation as a trusted, award-winning custom home builder. "We've always considered ourselves a people business first," Ian says. "We just happen to build homes." Kevco's four-step process emphasizes collaboration from the start, including a hands-on approach that keeps clients informed every step of the way. While attention to detail and customer satisfaction remain at the core, Ian is equally proud of the company's deeper purpose of giving back. Through the MIKE Endowment and Habitat for Humanity Lake County, Kevco supports local communities and their families. "It's a great experience for the company, but it's also deeply meaningful for the local families we support," Ian says. "Being able to contribute in this way, from the heart, is incredibly important to us."



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bob

TUCKER

When it comes to transforming moments into lasting memories, no one does it quite like Bob Tucker, an award-winning florist and local business owner. As the visionary behind Miss Daisy's Flowers & Gifts and Events by Miss Daisy in downtown Leesburg, Bob is known for his breathtaking floral designs and full-scale event production that leaves clients—and their guests—in awe.

A Florida State Master Designer (FSMD), Certified Floral Designer (CFD), and Certified Evaluator/Judge (CEJ) through the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD), Bob is among the most accredited professionals in the industry.

"These credentials reflect my commitment to excellence," he says. "In an unregulated field, education is how I raise the bar for my clients."

From elegant weddings and corporate galas to meaningful sympathy tributes and everyday bouquets, Bob, his trusted partners and his handpicked team of top-tier vendors offer a seamless, luxury experience.

"We can do just centerpieces or everything from start to finish so you don't have to lift a finger," he adds with a smile. "But whatever we do, it's going to be unforgettable."

*Events by
Miss Daisy*

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DR. **damian**

L. BLACK DMD, MS, FACP

Dr. Damian Black, a board-certified prosthodontist, brings precision, trust and clear communication to every patient interaction. Raised in South Florida, Dr. Black earned both his Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Dental Medicine degrees through the dual admissions program at Nova Southeastern University. After dental school, he served as a captain, then as a major, in the U.S. Air Force, completing residencies in general dentistry and prosthodontics while earning his Master of Science from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Dr. Black has a strong commitment to service, education and collaboration. He spent five years on the dental team at Langley Air Force Base before joining Village Periodontics & Dental Implant Center in Oxford, FL in 2021. His philosophy centers on the patient's ultimate goal of restoring confidence and quality of life.

Village Periodontics & Dental Implant Center is a state-of-the-art, multi-specialty practice led by two board-certified periodontists and a skilled prosthodontist, offering expert care in dental implants, gum disease treatment, and complex restorative solutions.



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W E A L T H M A N A G E M E N T

At Chandler Wealth, financial planning isn't just about numbers or a cookie-cutter approach – it's about creating a truly customized, high-level strategy that reflects the full complexity of each client's unique life. Founder Craig Chandler has built his practice around one core principle: real fiduciary care doesn't just mean doing what's right – it means having the depth, skill, and perspective to know how.

That's why Chandler Wealth weaves together estate planning, tax strategy, investment management and more – viewing every client's situation through a multidimensional lens.

Now, with the addition of Nathan Workman as Attorney and Chief Strategist, the firm's bench of expertise just got even deeper. A licensed attorney with a strong tax background, Nathan has worked with Craig for over a decade in various capacities. He returned full-time to the wealth management world after a close friend's passing inspired him to step in and help – and ultimately reminded him how much he values this work.

Nathan brings legal insight, investment expertise and a passion for solving complex problems. Clients now benefit from faster coordination, more comprehensive

strategies and a truly holistic approach to their financial life.

"Someone has to be the quarterback," Nathan says. "Someone who can see the whole field and guide the entire team – because if every advisor is pulling in different directions, clients lose."

At Chandler Wealth, clients now have that single point of coordination – someone who brings it all together. The result? Less stress. More clarity. And smarter decisions, from every angle.

"We're excited to have even more resources to pull from for our clients," Craig says. "They are our priority and properly securing their futures is our passion."



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Co-owners Ray Kassim, Jr. and Michael Solis are the creative force behind Graphics Direct, a thriving visual branding business serving Lake County for over 40 years. Specializing in signs, vehicle wraps, embroidered apparel, screen-printed merchandise, banners, LED signage and more, their work lights up

businesses—literally and figuratively.

"We're seeing huge growth in LED storefront signs and illuminated wall logos," says Michael, who grew up in the business under his dad's leadership. "But no matter how much we grow, we stay true to what got us here—quality and community."

"If you do something you love, it's not work. It's your passion."

Graphics Direct has been named Best Signs and Printing four

years running in the South Lake Chamber's South Lake Business Awards, a testament to their commitment. They also proudly serve repeat clients and local organizations, helping companies big and small stand out.

"The best part for me is that my business partner and my best friend are the same person," Ray adds about Michael. "And now, both of our kids get to see the cool things their dads create in the community."

ray kassim, jr.
CO-OWNER

michael solis
CO-OWNER



Azael

KAYSER

REALTOR®

Azael Kayser is a Central Florida real estate pro with deep roots in the region and a reputation for getting results. Originally from Panama, he now calls Orlando, Leesburg and Ocala home, helping buyers, sellers and relocating families navigate every step of the process. Known for his "Every Day Until It's Sold" approach, Azael doesn't just list homes – he markets them with daily intention. Additionally, he serves clients as a Mortgage Loan Officer and is a licensed Florida Real Estate Instructor.

With a master's in sports and exercise and a background in competitive swimming, Azael brings a focused, client-first mindset to real estate. He's highly credentialed, relocation-savvy and a trusted partner to first-time buyers, veterans and new construction clients alike. "I help buyers through the process so it's a good experience," he says. "Knowledge is power. I love to help families; that's what I find rewarding."

Azael serves on the board for the Leesburg Chamber and volunteers with the American Red Cross. He's a proud dad, bilingual and a Million Dollar Club member with ORRA.

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andy

P R I C E

Andy Price, owner of American Safety Utility Corporation, is bringing power, purpose and preservation to Leesburg. His company, founded in 1982, supplies electric utilities with the tools and testing they need to work safely.

With 60+ employees at his North Carolina headquarters, Andy recently opened a second location on Highway 44, featuring a high-voltage test lab and full tool outfitting services—with plans to grow big in Florida.

But his biggest impact? Lineman Ranch.

Formerly the Paquette Tractor Museum, the site is being transformed into the new home—relocated from North Carolina—of the International Lineman Museum, Hall of Fame and Fallen Lineman Memorial, honoring those who built America's electrical grid. "This is the greatest story never told," Andy says. "It will be something truly special for the community."

Artifacts date to 1865. Florida's J.D. Thompson—of the Pulitzer-winning Kiss of Life photo—is among those honored in what will become the nation's largest lineman destination.

He's also launched The Venue at Lineman Ranch, a picturesque new space for weddings, parties, festivals and other celebrations.

"We're bringing jobs, history and new experiences to Leesburg," Andy says.



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jeff

HURST

POOLS BY NOLAN JACOBS
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Whether writing songs in Nashville, working as a musician, a battalion fire chief, a cattle rancher and now, as owner of one of Lake County's fastest-rising luxury pool companies—Jeff Hurst doesn't do average.

Born and raised in Central Florida, Jeff spent years grinding between Florida and Music City, landing publishing deals and touring across Florida. All the while maintaining a career with Lake County Fire Rescue. Fast forward and he's swapped those demo tracks for design blueprints.

Now, with Pools by Nolan Jacobs — a name inspired by his sons — Jeff builds high-end custom pools that turn backyards into jaw-dropping escapes. "We only build a handful of pools a year," he says, "but they're elite, next level."

And when he's not building dream pools? He's teaming up with Kara, his wife of 18 years, to run their cattle ranch and raise their two boys, Mason and Nolan.

He brings that same energy to everything he does—from the firehouse to the family ranch—making their life a blend of heritage, hustle and heart.



MEN OF SUCCESS 2025

thomas

C O T T L E

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A legacy of friendship and craftsmanship fuels Painters Unleashed.

In 2020, Thomas Cottle launched Painters Unleashed with a simple mission: to carry on the legacy of his best friend, Patrick Bombard, former owner of Dom N Nate Painting, who passed away from COVID-19. Today, Thomas leads a thriving residential and commercial painting company serving all of Central Florida with a crew who shares his passion for quality and connection.

"I built this to be a company people can trust and call back again," Thomas says.

That focus on trust shows. Customers rave about the team's communication, attention to detail and the hands-on way they help clients navigate everything from tricky color choices to how lighting will affect a space. Painters Unleashed uses top-quality Sherwin-Williams products and was recently recognized as the second-fastest growing painting company in this area, according to Sherwin-Williams executives.

"It's an amazing feeling when a client sees the finished job and says, 'Wow!' Thomas adds. "We're about people first and building something beautiful and lasting in our community."



wesley

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Wesley Reed, founder of Reed Family Wealth Services in Clermont, has spent two decades helping clients navigate the complexities of financial planning. After 17 years with a large firm, he made the bold move to go fully independent—partnering with JW Cole Financial—to better serve his clients without being tied to proprietary products or corporate agendas. “Going independent gave me the freedom to make decisions based solely on what’s best for my clients,” he says.

As a fully licensed advisor, Wesley offers both transactional and fee-based services—ranging from investments and insurance to estate planning and beneficiary reviews. “Not every client fits into one model,” he explains. “Sometimes a pay-per-view model works better than a streaming subscription—and I can offer both.”

Clients appreciate Wesley’s holistic approach and proactive service. “The biggest complaint I hear is lack of communication. That’s where we stand out. We return calls. We engage. We care.”

Through personalized planning and consistent support, Wesley helps clients achieve financial confidence—and peace of mind.



isaac mitchell
MD

ali zarezadeh
MD

paul mahle
MD

cedric tankson
MD

jon radnothy
DO

U F H E A L T H M E D I C A L G R O U P

orthopaedics & spine

At UF Health Medical Group Orthopaedics & Spine, five cutting-edge physicians bring together decades of specialized expertise to provide comprehensive, patient-centered care throughout Lake, Sumter and Marion counties.

Together, this powerhouse team represents the best of orthopaedic and spine care—local, skilled and united in one mission: helping patients be at their best.

Dr. Isaac Mitchell, a familiar face in the Leesburg community since 2003, is a fellowship-trained, leading specialist in sports medicine and advanced shoulder care. "I live here, my kids go to school here – I'm invested in helping this community thrive, both in and out of the clinic," says Dr. Mitchell, who also mentors local students with an interest in medicine.

Dr. Cedric Tankson, a dedicated expert in foot and ankle care, specializes in the comprehensive treatment of complex conditions affecting the lower extremities.

"There are certain illnesses you can only manage, but with orthopaedics, you can help someone return to how they were before their injury. That's one of the things that attracted me to the field," he says.

Dr. Jon Radnothy brings more than three decades of trusted orthopaedic expertise to UF Health, specializing in robotic joint replacements of the hip, knee and shoulder. Before joining the organization in 2023, he built and led a thriving practice, earning a reputation not only for his clinical excellence but for his unwavering dedication to patient care and community service. "Patients come in for their one-year follow-up and are so fired up because we not only restore a hip or a knee, but their lives," he says.

Dr. Paul A. Mahle is a fellowship-trained orthopaedic surgeon specializing in minimally invasive and robotic hip and knee replacements, including complex revision surgeries. A

Central Florida native, he joined UF Health about six months ago. "It's incredibly rewarding to see patients go from pain and limitation to walking, golfing and enjoying life again," he says.

Rounding out UF Health's comprehensive orthopaedic and spine care team in central Florida is the recent addition of Dr. Ali Zarezadeh, a fellowship-trained spine surgeon and UF graduate. He specializes in common and complex spine conditions – including degenerative disease, deformity, tumors and traumatic injuries. "My goal is to take away pain and help patients stay active and independent, doing what they love for as long as they can," he says.

Over the past year, UF Health has responded to the growing community needs by assembling a dynamic team of orthopaedic and spine experts. With deep local roots and advanced expertise, this powerhouse group will continue to deliver exceptional care and lasting impact across the region.



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WELCOME HOME TO LAKE YALE ESTATES—a charming community nestled along the scenic shores of Lake Yale! Whether you're searching for a year-round retreat or a cozy winter getaway, this turnkey 3-bedroom, 2-bath home is the perfect find. Everything in the home stays! Sitting on a double lot with a newer roof and offering just over 1,400 sq. ft. of living space, all that's missing is you! **\$235,000.**



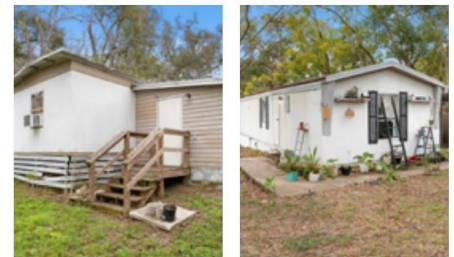
PRICED BELOW APPRAISED VALUE and with no HOA—yes, you read that right! Welcome to this charming Mid-Century home nestled in the desirable Love's Point area of Leesburg. Whether you're searching for a cozy place to call home or a smart investment opportunity, this property checks all the boxes. Offering 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, and timeless terrazzo flooring throughout, it blends character with comfort. **\$215,000.**



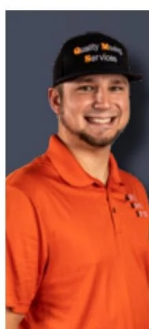
BIG. OPEN. CONVENIENT. Three virtues of a truly remarkable home! From the moment you pull into the brick paver driveway, you'll find over 3,000 reasons to say yes to this home. Offering 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, and over 3,000 sq. ft. of thoughtfully designed living space. Step inside and prepare to be floored—literally! The open-concept layout is designed for effortless everyday living and entertaining. A dedicated office/den greets you at the entrance, leading seamlessly into the heart of the home. **\$515,000.**



MOVE-IN READY AND FULL OF CHARM, this meticulously maintained 3-bedroom, 2-bath home is nestled in the desirable gated community of The Grove at Harbor Hills—a neighborhood known for its pride of ownership and lower HOA fee, offering a peaceful, well-kept environment without the high monthly dues. From the moment you arrive, you'll be captivated by the property improvements interior paint (2025), quartz countertops in kitchen (2025) Fresh landscaping (2025) Roof (2021), and more! **\$349,500.**



LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT ADDITION TO YOUR INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO? Look no further! This is your chance to own TWO homes for the price of ONE, located side by side and already tenant-occupied. With built-in rental income, this opportunity combines convenience and profitability like no other. Conveniently located to shopping and Hwy 27. **\$169,000.**



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WATERFRONT LOT ON THE CHAIN OF LAKES in Lake Harris Shores waterfront community. HOA fees are only 500.00 a year, includes water once you are hooked up to the private community well. Septic needed. Lot is 70x150. Build your new home and enjoy the florida lifestyle on the water. Community clubhouse with activities. Close to downtown tavares and mount dora. **\$264,900.**

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CANAL FRONT ON THE CHAIN OF LAKES-2 Bedroom 2 bath split plan home on canal leading to Little Lake Harris. Open and bright!! Freshly painted inside, new flooring, and new roof in 2019. Oversized 2 car garage. Boat house with boat lift. Home is very close to the opening of Little Lake Harris. The HOA fee is only 700.00 a year which also includes your water for the whole year. **WATERFRONT CLUB HOUSE AND GAZEBO TO ENJOY THOSE SUNSETS. PRIVATE BOAT RAMP.** Located close to the Florida Turnpike and just 10 minutes away to the Tavares Waterfront Seaplane park and unique restaurants and only 15 minutes away from downtown Mount Dora with quaint shopping and a variety of restaurants. Enjoy boating on the CHAIN OF LAKES TO ENJOY EATING OUT OR THOSE BEAUTIFUL SUNSETS. FISH FROM YOUR OWN BACK YARD. **\$375,000.**



Rich LeMoyne

Regional Manager

NMLS#333158

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Akers

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TURN-KEY 3BR/2B DESIGNER HOME IN SPANISH SPRINGS! Welcome to your dream home in Orange Blossom Gardens, located in the heart of the historic Spanish Springs area of The Villages, Florida. This stunning 1,599 sq. ft. former model home is designed for easy living in a 55+ community. **MLS#G5095522.**



NEW ROOF - 2021, NESTLED ON A STUNNING 14.87-ACRE LOT! This custom-built home presents endless opportunities and potential. Featuring a spacious floor plan, the property includes a closed-in garage that can easily be transformed into an additional bedroom or a bonus room, offering even more living space. With just a few interior updates, this home could become the dream home you've been searching for. **MLS# #G5093281.**



LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION! Nestled on a quiet cul-de-sac, this one-owner gem offers unbeatable proximity to top-rated schools, shopping, dining, and hospitals, with Disney and other theme parks just 30 minutes away. Boasting a brand-new roof and gutters (2022), an irrigation well, and prewired low-voltage cabling, exterior of the home was painted in 2022. This well-cared-for home is packed with value. **MLS# G5094013.**



SPACIOUS 4-BEDROOM HOME IN FRUITLAND PARK!

Come take a look at this beautifully updated 4-bedroom, 3-bath home in the quiet and well-established Spring Lake Pines community. Located in charming Fruitland Park, you're just minutes from The Villages, where you'll find a great mix of restaurants, shopping, entertainment, and schools—everything you need, close to home. This house is perfect for both relaxing and entertaining.

Call Lena 352.636.4488!





17.5 WOODED ACRES of lakefront property on Lake Deaton. This is a rare opportunity to purchase this large of a parcel directly on an approximately 500 acre Lake. This offering is for two parcels, Sumter County ID: G23-050 and G23-022, currently zoned RR5 within Sumter County. The adjacent property is zoned R2M, so the same zoning could be assigned to these two parcels. Upon rezoning, the property could yield seven lakefront lots at almost 80' wide, then with roads and drainage, the remaining land could possibly be divided into 18 interior one half acre lots, this is a concept only and has not been approved. Imagine the potential this type of development could have! It may be possible to seek proper zoning for a lakefront RV park. All information provided must be confirmed by the buyer. **\$2,400,000.** Contact Judd for more information.

Judd Dickerson

352.516.7809

Judd@MorrisRealtors.com



NEW CONSTRUCTION. Ready in June 2025, in the highly sought after Hamlin (Horizon West Medical) Development. This stunning new building will be coming in Summer of 2024. Direct Avalon Road frontage with easy access. Orlando Health Horizon West Hospital is only a quarter of a mile away and the new Orlando College of Osteopathic Medicine is approximately one half a mile. Absolute NNN lease with 5-year term minimum. The landlord will contribute \$35 psf for Tenant Improvements. Available units: #110 - 3,033 sf, #120 - 1,460 sf, #130 - 1,300 sf, #140 - 1,264 sf, #150 (Leased), #160 - 1,338 sf. Or, combine adjacent units to fit your needs. **MLS# G5097039 // \$48.00 Per Sq.Ft.** Contact Judd for more information.



UNDER CONSTRUCTION. The dark gray shell is estimated to be ready for delivery to prospective tenants in Fall of 2025. Bring your medical, office, or retail business to this amazing location. This property is adjacent to the new Wal-Mart to be constructed. This new Commercial strip center is direct frontage on CR466, a well traveled thoroughfare with over 25,000 vehicles per day, which is sure to increase with the new Wal-Mart to the east and Costco to the west. Available spaces are unit #200 which is 4,325 sq ft and unit #300 which is 2,935 sq ft, or combine for 7,260 sq ft. The adjacent space, unit #100, is a Dentist, under contract. The adjacent building, which is also under construction, will be a thriving Dermatology practice that will bring continuous traffic to the site. In addition to the base rent, there will also be \$4 CAM and \$4 additional rent to cover real estate taxes and insurance. 5-year lease term minimum. **MLS# G5096272 // \$35.00 Per Sq.Ft.**

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- Zillow.com
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- Local media outlets

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AMAZING ONE OF A KIND HOME NOW AVAILABLE!!! FIRST TIME EVER ON MARKET! Lovingly and meticulously maintained by the ORIGINAL OWNER! Located on a beautifully landscaped oversized corner lot with convenient circle driveway, this home features a 3/2 split plan, cozy living room with vaulted wood beam ceilings and beautiful wood burning fireplace. Enjoy your own backyard paradise complete with screened-in swimming pool, paver patio, and built in outdoor kitchen grill. The luxurious master suite is complete with a spacious bedroom and large walk in closet, walk in shower, and double vanity set up. Kitchen features plenty of counterspace and storage, with a wonderful 4 seat breakfast bar looking out to the pool area. NEW ROOF IN 2018. **\$489,000.**



DEVELOPMENT SITE NOW AVAILABLE IN THE VILLAGES AREA! Site consists of two lots comprising the entire corner of US HWY 441 & SE 156TH PL for a total 2.5 +/- ACRES!! Prime location just north of The Villages, located on busy Highway 441 with median cut & an average daily traffic count of 34,000 per day. Great exposure with 300' of HWY 441 frontage. This site is zoned B-2, which allows a multitude of uses including retail, shopping, center, restaurant, warehouse, office, or hotel. All engineering is completed for a 12,000sf building. Surveys for each parcel & St. John Water Management permit also available for review. **\$799,900.**



INVESTOR ALERT! RECENTLY BUILT & 100% LEASED! TWO EXCEPTIONALLY BUILT BLOCK & METAL OFFICE/ WAREHOUSES FOR SALE! Both buildings fully leased with annual rent increases and strong successful tenants. Building 1 consists of 11,696 sq ft and was built in 2021, while building 2 consists of 13,440 sq ft and was built in 2023. Total land size is 2.5+/- acres with 58 parking spaces. High quality office buildouts in each unit. Great visibility on Tally Rd. **\$5,000,000.**



GREAT DOWNTOWN TAVARES PROFESSIONAL OFFICE/ INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY! Great location with high visibility on busy E Alfred St/ Old 441 near downtown Tavares, this two unit office building presents great upside. Unit 407 is occupied by national insurance agency tenant, while unit 405 is occupied by owner and would make great office/ professional space for a variety of uses! Occupy one side for your own use or simply rent out both sides for a great income property! Very attractive newer style construction with great signage right on E Alfred St. Take advantage of this amazing opportunity today! **MLS# G5094258 // \$450,000.**



GREAT OPPORTUNITY! Historic Downtown Eustis. New roof within the past five years, several new A/C units, updated windows, electrical upgrades, and updated plumbing. Ground floor features nearly 8,000 sq.ft. of open-concept showroom or retail space. Upstairs, 3,000 sq.ft. of fully renovated office space and also six income-producing residential apartments. Parking is a breeze with ample street parking out front and a city-maintained lot directly beside the building. **MLS# G5096179 // \$2,250,000.**



ATTENTION INVESTORS! Historic landmark Leesburg bar and poolhall with restaurant and outdoor venue pavilion is up for sale! **THIS SALE INCLUDES A 4COP LIQUOR LICENSE.** Majority of fixtures, furniture and equipment will convey with sale, along with inventory. Downtown Leesburg is growing fast, don't miss this opportunity! Historic main building consists of approximately 4,550+/- sq ft indoor restaurant/kitchen, full bar, and pool hall, all tastefully renovated over the years and well maintained. There is also an outdoor bar, and a 2,000+/- sq ft covered pavilion and bandstand area with additional kitchen and restroom for outdoor events that was completed in 2011. **\$1,000,000.**



13.28 ACRES w/860ft highway frontage on US 27/441, the only 6 Lane Highway through the Villages, Florida. Virtually the only piece of vacant land of this size in the area which is totally on level ground, at roadside eye level. Can be seen from 1000 feet away. City utilities available. St Johns Water Management permit obtained, to expedite build out. Massive billboard highly visible. Likely traffic light at NE corner. Nearly 30,000 vehicles pass daily. Zoned PUD-Industrial with C-2 uses also allowed. **\$3,580,000**

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THIS STUNNING 3-BEDROOM, 2-BATHROOM HOME with a split floorplan and bonus den/office offers both comfort and style. Recently updated with a brand-new roof installed in April 2025, you can enjoy peace of mind knowing this major upgrade has been taken care of—no need to worry about future roof repairs for years to come! Inside, the spacious kitchen features solid surface countertops, cherry cabinets, and a built-in desk area perfect for working from home. Enjoy meals at the large breakfast bar or in the dinette area. Beautiful wood-style tile flooring flows throughout the home, complemented by brand-new carpet in the bedrooms. The home is designed with 9' ceilings, rounded corners, and architectural niches that add a unique touch of charm. The large living room seamlessly opens to a covered, screened-in porch through French doors, offering the perfect indoor-outdoor living experience. **\$339,000. Call Lena 352-636-4488!**

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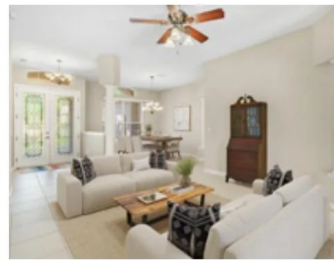
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Let Lindsay Lead You Home



THIS BEAUTIFUL 3/2 HOME checks all the boxes—privacy, charm, and low-maintenance living! Nestled in the sought-after 55+ community, this home backs up to a serene retention pond, giving you a rare sense of peace and quiet. Roof replaced in 2025, AC in 2022—this home is move-in ready, and the seller is willing to leave most furniture, making your move even easier!



NEW ROOF COMING SOON! Spacious 3-Bed, 3-Bath Home with No Rear Neighbors in Gated Community. If you've been searching for space, comfort, and convenience — this is the one! Spanning 2,803 sq. ft. all on one level, this beautifully designed 3-bedroom, 3-bathroom home is ready to impress with a large, screened birdcage enclosure, and access to community amenities including a pool and playground.

GET READY TO SAY YES to this 3-bedroom, 2-bath home with NO HOA that checks all your boxes. Looking for a remodeled interior? Check. A 2-car garage? Check. A 10'x20' shed that perfectly matches your home? Check. A spacious, fenced-in yard? Check! Everything in this home has been thoughtfully updated, including a new roof in 2021, a hot water heater in 2024, a new gas line in 2023, new AC and ductwork in 2020, new electrical panels inside and out in 2023, and professionally painted inside and out. As you step through the front door, you're welcomed by a large living room with a cozy fireplace and built-in shelves, creating a space that feels like it's straight out of a Pinterest magazine. The expansive dining room, with its nine windows, bathes the space in natural light and offers a perfect view of your patio, making it ideal for entertaining.



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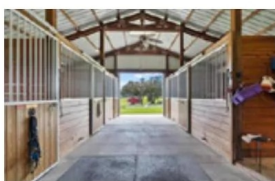


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EQUESTRIAN LOVERS DREAM HOME... 17 ACRE ESTATE! Welcome home to your "WORKING HORSE RANCH" and this NO HOA relaxed country living being sold FULLY FURNISHED "TURNKEY"...includes farm equipment to include a Kubota Tractor (900 hours like new), Zero turn 3-Year-Old Mower and a new Land Pride Mower, too! This METICULOUS ESTATE features TWO HOMES on shared well! Main House situated on 10.88 Acres offers a spectacular pool with wood gas outdoor fireplace plus huge Garage! Also included in the sale is the "Caretaker residence (guest house or "mother-in-law" quarters) on a separate parcel include an immaculate Two Bedroom & Two Bath residence with 960 Square ft of living area on 6.19 Acres with its own address and separate entrance! Immaculate 6 STALL HORSE BARN features, tack room, 6 stalls, corral round pin, extra storage & full bathroom with a walk-in shower plus outside patio area with full RV hook up with electric & sewer! Enter through your private IRON GATED ENTRANCE to the fully fenced property and the deep brick-paver driveway, you'll be greeted by an oversized front porch, perfect for relaxing in your rocking chairs and soaking in the serene surroundings and fabulous pasture views! Step inside to a spacious great room featuring soaring volume ceilings, recessed lighting, a cozy wood-burning dual Stone Fireplace and French doors that open to the lanai and pool area. The gourmet kitchen is a "chef's delight" with a granite island breakfast bar, custom cabinetry, and an oversized walk-in pantry. High-end appliances include a side-by-side refrigerator with bottom freezer, 6-burner gas range, double convection oven, dishwasher, and drawer microwave. Enjoy casual meals in the breakfast nook area or host gatherings in the formal dining/family room, which boasts a wet bar, wine refrigerator, mini-fridge, and a grand stone fireplace reaching up to the ceiling! The downstairs guest bath is a showstopper with a gold above bowl sink, mirrored medicine cabinet, and custom walk-in glass shower. First level bedrooms share a remodeled "Jack n Jill" unique bath with a triple head walk in shower. Two possible stair entrances at each end of home will lead you upstairs where you'll find a custom wall mural that led you to the cozy den/office or loft area! The enormous LUXURIOUS PRIMARY SUITE offers a "Romeo and Juliet" private iron balcony overlooking elevated gorgeous pool & pasture views with 6 paddocks, and New Pole Barn plus Metal Building with two Bay Doors for Equipment & additional vehicle storage! The ensuite bathroom features a walk-through shower with dual heads, soaking "Jacuzzi" tub, separate dual vanities, and custom oversized dual walk-in closets. Also included in the Suite is your own private fitness room that could be a great office/Den! Guest Bedroom feature a large walk-in closet and share the fourth renovated bath that offers a spacious vanity and walk-in shower. Inside laundry room is fully equipped with custom cabinets, sink, and Whirlpool washer and dryer. Outdoor living shines in the lanai, where you'll find a full summer kitchen with commercial grade grill built into the granite countertops next to the self-cleaning pool and hot tub with 6 jets! The oversized garage includes an AC-equipped bonus/craft room and two garage doors, one with a convenient screen. Don't miss your chance to experience this incredible country lifestyle! **\$1,995,000.**



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OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS with this three bedroom, two bath home located in the gated, golf community of Harbor Hills. Light and bright inside, this open feel concept home has a split bedroom layout. The living room/ dining area has high ceiling, crown molding and French doors out to the screened back lanai. **BRAND NEW ROOF** March 2025. **\$345,000.**



DISCOVER CHARM AND SOPHISTICATION in this stunning custom-built Sago model home, located in the desirable Bella Vista section of Harbor Hills. This spacious three-bedroom, two-bathroom home features a den/office and boasts impressive curb appeal. Situated on an elevated lot, the property includes a paver driveway, side-entry garage, and an additional golf cart garage. Upon entering, you'll be greeted by an open-concept living area with beautiful views of the resort-style pool and outdoor space. The large ceramic tile, laid on the diagonal, enhances the feeling of space and light throughout. The gourmet kitchen is a chef's dream, featuring a two-tier island with seating for four, sleek stainless-steel appliances, an eye-catching backsplash, pendant lighting, and a custom walk-in pantry. Step through the triple sliding doors located in living room to your own personal paradise — a sparkling pool with a waterfall, surrounded by a spacious outdoor living area perfect for relaxing mornings and peaceful evenings. Additional upgrades include plantation shutters, a redesigned septic system with a second tank, and a custom landscape design with a 7-zone irrigation system. **\$569,000.**



ONE-OF-A-KIND CUSTOM LOG CABIN IN BEAUTIFUL LADY LAKE! Private & Stunning! Nestled on just shy of 10 secluded acres in Lady Lake, just minutes from The Villages, this brand-new, never-lived-in custom log cabin is a rare and stunning find in this area! Designed for privacy and tranquility, the home sits at the very back of the property, creating a peaceful retreat with endless possibilities. Every detail of this custom-built 2-bedroom, 2-bath home showcases top-tier craftsmanship and thoughtful design. **\$699,900.**



LADY LAKE LIVING AT IT'S BEST! Welcome to this stunning three bedroom home in the beautiful Oak Pointe community located in lovely Lady Lake. This custom beauty offers an open and airy floor plan with high-end finishes throughout. The home also includes ceramic tile floors throughout, an air-conditioned enclosed Florida room, energy-efficient LED lighting, a fire sprinkler suppression system, security cameras, and a pre-installed electric dog fence. A Generac whole-house generator adds peace of mind, and the home comes with a transferable home warranty. This beautifully designed property offers a true sense of comfort and convenience, making it the perfect place to call home. **\$475,000.**

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BRING YOUR BOAT AND FISHING POLES! Located just one house in on the canal right off of Lake Eustis, this 3 bedroom 2 bath home is now available! NO HOA! This home has every fishermen's dream dock with large boat house/ hoist. You can enjoy boating to all of the amazing restaurants on the chain of lakes right from your back yard. This home is also located just minutes to shopping, hospitals and so much more! Call today to start living your waterfront dream tomorrow! **MLS# G5093163 / \$299,000**

Lauren Fickett

Realtor®

352.636.2167

Lauren@MorrisRealtors.com

Leave It To Lauren!



WELCOME TO SUNSET BOULEVARD

The dream come true of homes! Situated on over 3 pristine acres with privacy walls on both sides of the property, this luxury home welcomes you down a gated, long driveway to the gorgeous paver portico. As you enter through the double door entry way, be prepared to say WOW! You will immediately fall in love with the stunning views of the lake with the open floor plan, ceiling to floor glass windows in the great room and the top of the line kitchen. Almost all of the rooms in the house have that same beautiful lake view. This home is even equipped with an elevator for your needs. The primary bedroom will make it hard to want to leave with the spectacular views of the lake, the private sitting balcony, the gas fireplace for enjoying on those cool evenings and the large bathroom with walk in shower and relaxing garden bath. If you are looking for a home that has an in-law suite, this one has it! This home was designed for entertaining and you will love to entertain in the game room upstairs that has a half bath and built in bar then move into the large theater room to finish the night with a movie and popcorn. Picture your perfect summer afternoon here lounging by the beautiful pool with friends enjoying the stunning custom outdoor bar. As you make your way to lake you will love spending those hot Florida summer lake days on your own private white sandy beach that continues out into the water. Double boat lifts and double jet ski lifts make it easy for you to come and go on the lake. Another perk to this amazing estate is the convenience to all of The Villages amenities such as shopping, restaurants, medical facilities and so much more! A luxurious waterfront estate this meticulous and extravagant does not happen often... call today to come see this home that will make you fall in love at first sight! **\$3,600,000.**



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GRACIOUS AND WELCOMING HOME located in the lovely community of Coachwood East in Leesburg, Florida. Charming 2 bedroom 2 bath manufactured home in 55+ community move in ready! This welcoming home has 1,248 +/- Sqft of living area, features a large bright and airy Florida room, perfect for enjoying the sunshine. **\$149,500.**



NOW IS YOUR CHANCE to kick back and relax and enjoy ... This charming 2 bedroom 2 bath home on a spacious corner lot! Discover the potential in this 1,335+/- Sqft home, ideally situated on a generous corner lot. Featuring a large kitchen with abundant cabinetry an convenient breakfast bar, this home also offers a spacious living room and dining area for entertaining and relaxing. **\$144,500.**



MOVE-IN-READY Looking for the perfect year-round living or a relaxing seasonal getaway, look no further. Step into comfort with this fully furnished, beautifully maintained 2 bedrooms 2 bath property. This exceptional home includes newer H/ VAC system installed 2019, New Roof in 2021, Bright and beautiful 22' x 10' Florida Room, which is under heat and air. Remodeled bathrooms, kitchen countertops, sink and new faucet. New windows throughout home. New flooring throughout home. **\$149,900.**

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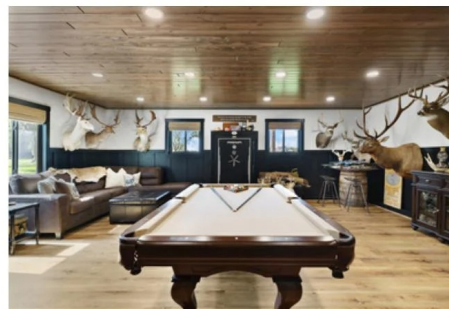
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STUNNING LAKE DORA LAKEFRONT HOME IN TAVARES COMPLETELY REMODELED & MOVE-IN READY! Sitting on over an acre of beauty, you will be stunned the moment you drive the long, peaceful driveway that leads to your impressive new HOME. Located in one of the most desirable spots directly on Lake Dora, this home has been meticulously updated from top to bottom, blending modern design with timeless charm. Let's start with a brand-new roof with certainiteed lifetime architectural shingles with a storm shield peel and stick underlayment and a 15 year transferrable warranty! Step inside to discover brand-new luxury vinyl plank flooring throughout, with a gorgeous open-concept layout that makes the most of the perfect lake views. The completely remodeled kitchen is a chef's dream, featuring a massive 15-foot center island, high-end appliances, and a custom coffee bar that could easily double as a bar area. The kitchen opens seamlessly to the living and dining areas, allowing for effortless entertaining with views of the sparkling waters of Lake Dora. Enjoy cozy evenings by the real wood-burning brick fireplace with custom built-ins, or step outside through the screened porch to take in the intimate lake views under a gorgeous tongue and groove ceiling. Bring the fishing poles and the boat to the dock featuring a 40 ft long boat slip...this truly is the best spot for the water lovers! The home features spacious guest bedrooms with a brand-new bathroom, and a massive laundry room that doubles as a convenient mudroom. The bonus room offers endless possibilities – perfect for a game room, man cave, or office area, complete with its own mini-split system for maximum comfort. Upstairs, the master retreat provides the perfect escape, complete with a private balcony overlooking Lake Dora. Enjoy hours of relaxation on the private Master Retreat balcony, while taking in the panoramic views including the fourth of July fireworks from over three cities. The master suite also boasts a large walk-in closet that has been customized and a newly updated ensuite bathroom with a custom stone shower. Additional features include brand new Pella energy efficient windows, hardie board siding with extra insulation for energy efficiency as well, along with top-of-the-line fixtures throughout. There is a well for irrigation and an advanced water purification system. New paint and cedar wood accents throughout give the home a modern yet rustic feel. Live the lakefront dream and make this one-of-a-kind property yours today! **\$1,290,000.**

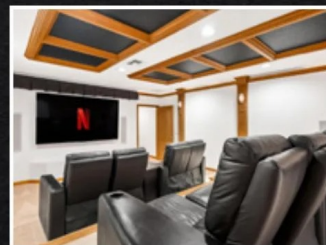
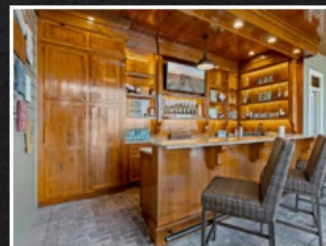


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Luxurious lakefront home on 3 pristine acres to include a 6 bedrooms, 5 full baths, 2 half baths, a full in law suite, elevator, movie theatre, private white sand beach, double boat lifts and a top of the line Malibu wake boat.

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE 13

Contact Lauren Fickett at 352-636-2167 or Lauren@MorrisRealtors.com



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Tony Rizzo holding an image of Clint Eastwood



IN THE COMPANY *of* LEGENDS

Behind the memorabilia lies a Village of Alhambra resident's life among the famous.

STORY AND PHOTOS: CINDY PETERSON

Tony Rizzo isn't an avid golfer, but you wouldn't know it when you step into his 'man cave' — or rather the room his wife allows her hubby to fill with rare memorabilia.

Walls lined with decades-old tournament decanters, and photographs of Tony at golf tournaments with legends like Clint Eastwood, Jack Lemmon, James Garner and Jack Nicklaus tell a story far bigger than the game itself.

Tony, 83, has lived quite the life.

He grew up in Brooklyn, amid the noise and hustle of the city, shining shoes outside bars, picking up quarters from regulars and earning five or six dollars a day, a small fortune for a child.

Tony remembers feeling like "King Kong for the week," reveling in bubble gum and the small luxuries a quarter-a-shine could buy . . . until his family relocated to Miami when he was 12.

Tony completed high school in Florida and joined the Navy, where he gained life experience and discipline that would serve him well in decades to come.

After his service, Tony found his first true profession in the beauty industry, becoming what he jokingly calls a "Ph.D.—Professional hairDresser." He worked alongside his first wife, also a hairdresser, and the pair moved to New Jersey where they ran a large, successful salon.

"Then came the divorce," says Tony, who felt the need to

make a change. "So, I moved out to California."

Inspired by a dream to see the state, Tony and some friends packed up and drove down the coast. When they reached the quiet, elegant streets of Carmel (officially called Carmel-by-the-Sea), Tony was struck by the beauty and charm of the place. He met a real estate agent at Clint Eastwood's restaurant, The Hog's Breath Inn, an encounter that set wheels in motion. Within weeks, he had returned to Jersey, packed up his salon, his possessions, even his speedboat, and moved permanently to Carmel.

Tony quickly established a new salon in town and built a life among the artists, actors and well-heeled residents of the Monterey

Peninsula. His charisma, wit, and intuitive knack for connecting with people made him a sought-after stylist and his client list soon included local elites and celebrities. Among them was Eastwood, who occasionally had Tony cut his hair.

"We became good friends and we'd hang out or he'd come over to my house," Tony says. "We were good buddies."

When the salon life began to wear on him, Tony was offered an opportunity by a longtime client, the president of Pebble Beach.

"He said, 'Come manage a restaurant for me because you know everybody in Carmel,'" Tony recalls.

Tony accepted and managed the Tap Room at The Lodge at Pebble Beach, one of the most prestigious golf resorts in the world. There, his life intersected with numerous powerful figures in business, entertainment and sports.

The Tap Room was downright electric during the Pebble Beach Pro-Am tournaments.

"My room was elbow to elbow," Tony says. "All the biggest CEOs in the country used to come off the golf course."

While most people might be starstruck, Tony kept his cool, never asking for autographs or bowing to a celebrity. In fact, he became known for treating

"I've traveled all over the world, except Asia. I'm going to Greenland, maybe Australia again if I'm not on a stretcher by then. In all seriousness, I've had a great life. If I check out tomorrow, I have no regrets."



Jack Nicklaus, Greg Norman
Clint Eastwood and others



Larry Gatlin and Tony Rizzo



Ed DiBartolo, Tony Rizzo,
Dwight Clark and other



Clint Eastwood and Tony Rizzo playing bocce with others



Tony Rizzo modeling alongside the original
"Marlboro Man," Robert "Bob" Norris



“I’d like to sell the collection because I want it to be taken care of when I’m gone.”



everyone the same—whether they were a golf legend or a dishwasher.

"I never envied anybody," he says about a philosophy that shaped much of his outlook on life.

Tony's golf memorabilia collection began with a few Crosby Pro-Am decanters bearing unique designs that were given away each year at the tournament.

"I just got carried away from there," he admits.

His collection expanded rapidly as he accumulated tournament mementos, eBay finds, gifts and personal photographs. From 1970s decanters to a limited-edition flag signed by Hall of Fame female golfers, his home became a gallery of golf history—even though, ironically, Tony himself never played.

"I have the patience of a gnat," he says.

The collection's true value, however, is not just in the items, but in the stories behind them. There are photos with Hollywood icons like James Garner and Larry Gatlin, snapshots of Tony and Eastwood

playing bocce and shots from Tahoe and classic tournaments. One particularly prized photo shows him walking the course with Clint Eastwood, Greg Norman and Jack Nicklaus during a practice round—a memory few can claim.

Even after moving away from Carmel, Tony's life remained rich with creativity and entrepreneurial energy. In Sacramento, he pivoted again, this time to high-end furniture sales and interior design. He quickly became the top sales representative at his company for nine years running. It was in Sacramento that he met his wife, Dona. The couple eventually made their way to The Villages, where they've lived for 27 years.

Dona became well-known in the community through her work in real estate, while Tony took a job with the district government before finally retiring. Today, their lives are filled with quiet joys.

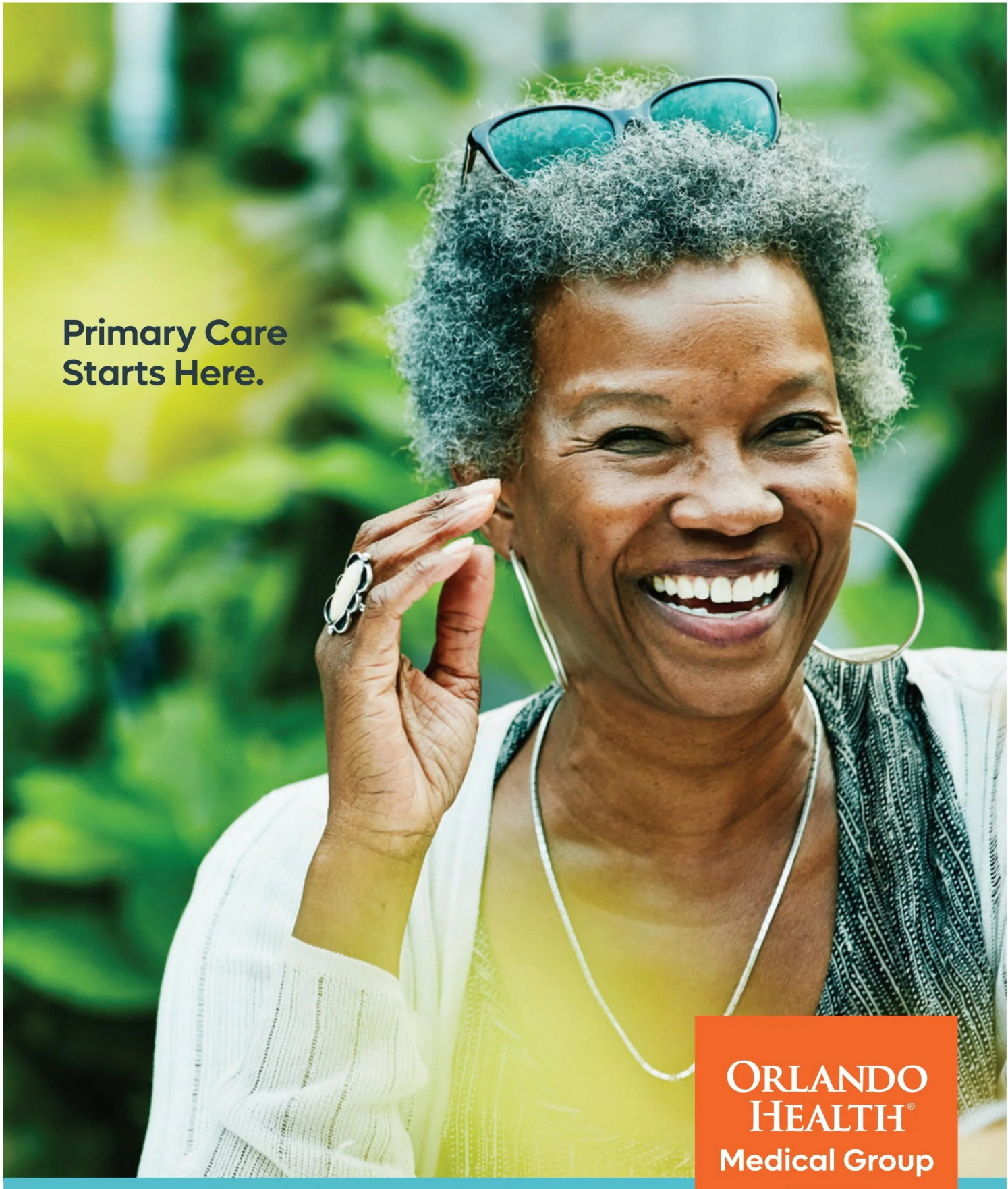


True to form, Tony has also dabbled in art and photography, and even launched a whimsical side project with friends called “Blueprints for Food”—artistic layouts of classic American meals like fried chicken and burgers. He tells how one of his designs was even mimicked by McDonald’s, though unofficially. “They used another pickle,” he said, only half amused.

Today, Tony is starting to think seriously about what happens to his golf collection should something happen to him. "I'd like to sell the collection because I want it to be taken care of when I'm gone."

Looking back, Tony wouldn't change a thing.

"I've done everything I wanted to do," he says. "I've traveled all over the world, except Asia. I'm going to Greenland, maybe Australia again if I'm not on a stretcher by then. In all seriousness, I've had a great life. If I check out tomorrow, I have no regrets." ❌



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AGENDA

EVENTS
TRAVEL
PEOPLE

LOCAL TALENT

Leesburg couple's love story began with spring break adventures, a wild boar, a guitar and grew into something divine.

78





2025

june

FESTIVAL

JUNE
7

Cool Runnings

Celebrate Caribbean culture with vibrant music, bold flavors and community spirit at the Clermont Caribbean Jerk Festival. This lively event is more than fun—it's a big-time fundraiser supporting scholarships for underserved youth in Lake County. Come for the jerk chicken, stay for the rhythms and help make a difference in a young life.

→ 330 3rd St., Clermont / 561.951.4035
352.978.0813 / Noon-9pm



JUNE 12

EVENT

Man-Made

Celebrate Father's Day at The Venetian Center with the first-ever All-Male Vendor Showcase presented by Whimsy Market. Enjoy over 40 men-owned vendors, food trucks, live music, specialty drinks and exciting giveaways. It's the perfect day out to shop, sip and support talented men in business. Free admission and parking make it even better.

→ 1 Dozier Cir., Leesburg / whimsy-market.com



EVENT

JOYFUL LEGACY

Celebrate freedom, resilience and unity at the Juneteenth Parade and Festival in Umatilla, hosted by It Takes a Village Foundation. Enjoy a powerful day of culture, music, community, history and progress. Bring the whole family for an uplifting and unforgettable experience. Parade, entertainment, kid zone and marketplace. Starts at 9am.

→ 17107 Ball Park Rd., Umatilla / 352.857.7355 / Starts at 9am

*Check with nearby cities, too—other Juneteenth events may be planned throughout the region.

JUNE 14



ONGOING EVENTS

Events are subject to change and cancellation.

EVERY WEEKEND

Lakeridge Winery
presents: Weekends at
the Winery
10am-5pm Sat.
11am-5pm Sun.
19239 US 27, Clermont

EVERY MON

Webster
Farmers Market
6am-2pm
524 N. Market Blvd.,
Webster

EVERY TUE

Lady Lake
Farmers Market
9am-2pm
250 Rolling Acres Rd.,
Lady Lake

EVERY THU

Lake County Farmers
and Flea Market
8am-noon
2101 N. CR 452,
Eustis

1ST FRI

Eustis First Friday
6-9pm
Downtown Eustis

1ST FRI

Clermont First Friday
Food Trucks
5:30-9pm
685 W. Montrose St.,
Clermont

EVERY SUN

Downtown Clermont
Farmers Market
9am-2pm
Downtown Clermont





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june ON STAGE

Enjoy quality entertainment on the many stages of Lake and Sumter counties.

LOVE, UNFILTERED

6/1-28

I Love You. You're Perfect, Now Change is a witty musical romp through modern relationships. From awkward dates to family chaos and everything between, this off-Broadway favorite delivers laughs and heart in equal measure. A must-see for anyone who's loved, lost or dared to try again. Adult themes, language and nudity.

The Studio Theatre-Tierra del Sol

806 San Marino Dr., The Villages / 352.753.3229
thevillagesentertainment.com



LAUGHS ON TAP

6/7

Get ready for a night of nonstop laughs at Comedy Night in Wildwood at the Warfield Auditorium. Doors open at 5:30pm for this 21-and-up event featuring live stand-up performances, a food truck on site and drinks available at the cash bar. Tickets are \$15 per person and reservations are required.

Warfield Auditorium

Visit www.wildwood-fl.gov or call 352.461.0134 to register.



JUNE
21

FESTIVAL

No smartphones allowed

Grab your smartest friends and head to Warfield Auditorium in Wildwood for Adult Trivia Night. Get ready for trivia, laughs and friendly competition. Light bites, a cash bar and big bragging rights for the winners. @

→ Doors open at 7pm / Show starts at 8pm / Ages 21 and up
Registration required at www.wildwood-fl.gov.

Let us help you get the word out!

→ To have an event considered for the calendar, send a short text description along with a color photo (if available) 45 days in advance of event to:
calendar@akersmediagroup.com or Lake & Sumter Style Calendar,
P.O. Box 490088, Leesburg, FL 34749

ONGOING EVENTS Events are subject to change and cancellation.

MON & FRI NIGHTS

**Car Shows
in The Villages**
5-8pm

Lake Sumter Landing &
Brownwood Paddock Square

EVERY FRI

Groveland Farmers Market
9am-1pm
Lake David Park

EVERY SUN

**Downtown Mount Dora
Village Market**
9am-2pm
Downtown Mount Dora

SECOND SAT

Plaid in the Park
5-9pm
230 W. 4th Ave., Mount Dora

EVERY SAT

**Spanish Springs
Mercado Outdoor
Market & Music**
9am-2pm

1ST & 3RD WEEK

**Market Night
in The Villages**
5-9pm
Tue-Spanish Springs
Wed-Lake Sumter
Thu-Brownwood

juneJAMS

Move to the beat of your favorite performers at these great concerts or local venues!

6/3 @ 3pm

MICHELLE INGRHAM

Edna's on the Green, Wildwood

6/5 @ 7pm

SHOWCASE

Orange Blossom Opry, Weirsdale

6/6 @ 7pm

FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE

The Orange Blossom Opry, Weirsdale

6/7 @ 7pm

FOREVER SIMON & GARFUNKEL

The Orange Blossom Opry, Weirsdale

6/8 @ 12pm

MATT CAPPS

Edna's on the Green, Wildwood

6/8 @ 2:30pm & 7pm

SAWYER BROWN

The Orange Blossom Opry, Weirsdale

6/10 @ 3pm

JR REICH

Edna's on the Green, Wildwood

6/12 @ 3pm

DALE STUMBO

Edna's on the Green, Wildwood

6/14 @ 7pm

ONE IRISH ROVER: THE MUSIC OF VAN MORRISON

The Orange Blossom Opry, Weirsdale

6/15 @ 4pm

SCOTTY BARTEK

Edna's on the Green, Wildwood

6/17 @ 5pm

MARK RAISCH

Red Sauce, Lake Sumter Landing, The Villages

6/20 @ 12pm

RENEE MEADOWS

Edna's on the Green, Wildwood

6/21 @ 7pm

MEET LOAF, A TRIBUTE TO MEATLOAF

The Orange Blossom Opry, Weirsdale

6/21 @ 7pm

TRIBUTE TO AEROSMITH

Whispering Oaks Winery, Oxford

6/22 @ 12pm

ACOUSTIC BLUE

Edna's on the Green, Wildwood

6/23 @ 3pm

DAN FLOK

Edna's on the Green, Wildwood

6/27 @ 4pm

SANDRA & ALEX LEKID

Edna's on the Green, Wildwood

6/28 @ 7pm

CCR TRIBUTE STARRING

KEVIN KINGSTON

Orange Blossom Opry, Weirsdale

6/28 @ 3pm

PETRINA

Holy Sh'mokes, The Villages

6/30 @ 3pm

THE MUDDS

Edna's on the Green, Wildwood

ONGOING EVENTS Events are subject to change and cancellation.

2NDSAT

**Main Street
Classic Car Show**

5-9pm
510 W. Main St., Leesburg

4THSAT

**Eustis Classic Car
Cruise-in**

4-8pm
Downtown Eustis

2NDFRI

**Second Friday
Farmers Market**

5-9pm
Lake David Park, Groveland

1STSAT

Brown's Junk in the Trunk

13940 US 301, Oxford
(Use the field gate
south of Brown's Country
Store on Hwy. 301)

SATURDAYS

**Villages Farmers
Market Brownwood**

Paddock Square
9am-2pm

EVERY MON

**Boozy Bingo
at Sawgrass Grove**

5-8pm
766 Marilee Pl., The Villages

PEOPLE

Making a Nayme for Themselves

Kevin and Kristen Baker built Nayme Brand on healing power of music.

STORY: GINA HORAN × PHOTO: NICOLE HAMEL

The origin of the band “Nayme Brand” began with Kevin Baker’s adolescent humor and laidback attitude towards the copyright process.

“When I was filling out paperwork for my first band, the form asked for a stage name so I put Kevin Name,” he said. “The rest of the band teased me, but we messed around with the spelling and it stuck.”

Decades later, Nayme Brand has evolved into music,

ministry and a shared mission with Kevin’s wife, Kristen.

The couple met in 2007 while Kevin was playing a 10-day gig in Daytona Beach and she was visiting from New Jersey on spring break. “We both felt an instant connection,” Kristen says. “Over the next few weeks, we kept each other company long distance on our flip phones.”

Kristen moved to Florida that summer, just before their first kiss, which occurred out in the woods and inspired by . . . a wild boar.

“It just appeared out of nowhere and the next thing I knew she was in my arms,” Kevin says.

They got married in August 2008, and about a year later, Kevin bought her a bass and an amp and began teaching her how to play. “I never saw myself as a musician,” Kristen says. “But it’s part of our journey.”

That journey continued for years as he performed at EPCOT as a guitarist in Disney’s British Revolution, while she worked as a bartender at the Marriott. “We met so many people,”





Kristen says. "That whole experience was filled with positive energy."

In 2020, the pandemic hit and both were let go with barely any notice. "We didn't know what to do," Kristen says. "One day we were fully employed living our life and the next day it was over."

Both were newly sober at the time, and as they neared their one-year sobriety milestone, they decided to mark the occasion with a livestreamed music session. "That first livestream is still on our Facebook page," Kristen says. "It wasn't perfect, but it was real and people connected with it."

The audience grew, with some in recovery and others simply needing to connect. One viewer, watching from a hospital bed due to alcohol poisoning, kept coming back.

"Now he's five years sober," Kevin says. "It still gives me chills."

Kevin, a native Texan, is known for playing his guitar behind his head, the signature move he picked up in high school while emulating his hero Stevie Ray Vaughan.

These days, their faith is the foundation of everything they do. "I grew up believing in God," Kevin says. "My grandfather was a pastor, but I didn't feel a true connection until a friend invited me to play guitar at Kensington Church in Windermere, which is now called Crossline."

He teaches guitar six days a week at Nayme Brand Studios in Leesburg, instructing students age 5 to 85. His teaching

approach is personal and often includes mentorship alongside music instruction.

"People who aren't Christian will say that there is something extra about our vibe and we think what they're really feeling is just the Jesus in us."

— KEVIN BAKER

"I've worked with students overcoming traumatic brain injuries and all kinds of challenges," he says. "I try to meet each one where they are, as I believe the years I spent as a youth leader shaped my mindset into being a teacher and a life coach."

The couple lives in Leesburg, performing as Nayme Brand and blending covers with original worship music. Their tagline, "Playing name brand hits throughout the decades," was Kristen's idea to help people pronounce the quirky name.

They love to walk to work, as Kevin teaches just down the street and Kristen works mornings at Breakfast at Tiffany's in the center of town. Evenings are spent performing, writing or planning events through WOW Cares, their nonprofit supporting Worship on the Water, a free monthly faith and music event held every third

Sunday
at Venetian

Gardens in Leesburg.

The Bakers' faith often shows up in the way they interact with others.

"People who aren't Christian will say that there is something extra about our vibe and we think what they're really feeling is just the Jesus in us," Kevin says.

Together, Kevin and Kristen are six years sober and believe that their marriage, music and ministry are built on grace, purpose and a desire to help others find peace and joy through faith.

"We're not trying to be famous," Kevin says. "We're just trying to love people well, play honest music and use whatever we've been given to serve something greater than ourselves." @



Know of a talented person in our community?

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GINA HORAN



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Ann Vogt, Helena & Chuck Kerzig



Police Chief Shawn Ramsey
& Steve Smith



Robin Hoover & Sharon Keeble

CHARM MEETS CHANGE

@ GROVELAND × PHOTOS: MATTHEW GAULIN

The City of Groveland invited its wonderful community to the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Elese Tomlin Empowerment Center in January. Highlights included speeches from Mayor Keith Keogh, Livewell Foundation of South Lake Executive Director Donna Kirtland and Anointed Community Services International CEO Dr. Linda Cowels. There was also a dedication to Elese Tomlin's family, a violin performance by Andres Villa and guided tours of the new facility. The center—funded by the Live Well Foundation in collaboration with Anointed Community Services International and help from the city—will offer educational and vocational programs. @



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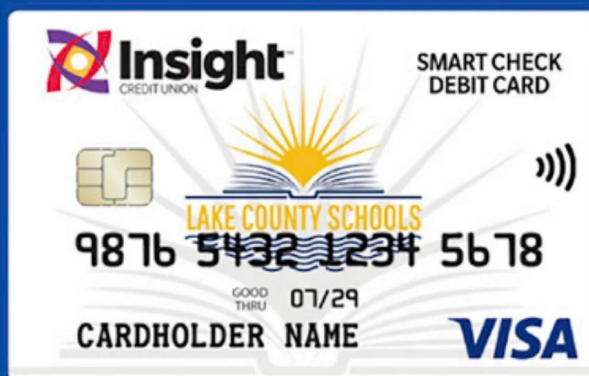
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Emily, Makayla & Erika Poortenga



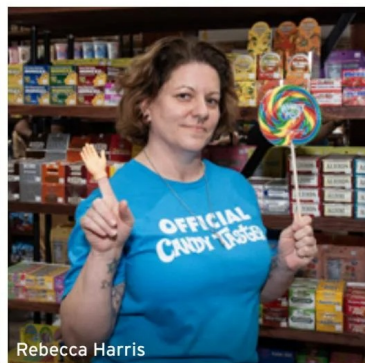
Leesburg Mayor Alan Reisman with Sawyer, Grady, Porter, Mason & Madelyn Humphreys



Capri Willis



Grandpa Joe's Crew Nathan, Emily, Melissa, Leslie & Ben



Rebecca Harris



Junior Miss Leesburg Abby Carlton & Teen Miss Leesburg Shaylin Shumate

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GOLDEN TICKET

@ **LEESBURG** X **PHOTOS: NICOLE HAMEL**

A sweet crowd turned out for the grand opening of Grandpa Joe's Candy Shop in downtown Leesburg. Guests were greeted with over 300 varieties of soda, quirky knick-knacks, a \$5 candy buffet and nearly every sweet treat imaginable — all wrapped in nostalgic charm from wall to wall. Leesburg Mayor Alan Reisman joined the festivities and applauded the store's contribution to Main Street's revitalization. Owner Chris Beers and local manager Joel Fritzinger kept details hush-hush before unveiling the vibrant space now open daily for families to explore, indulge and reminisce. @

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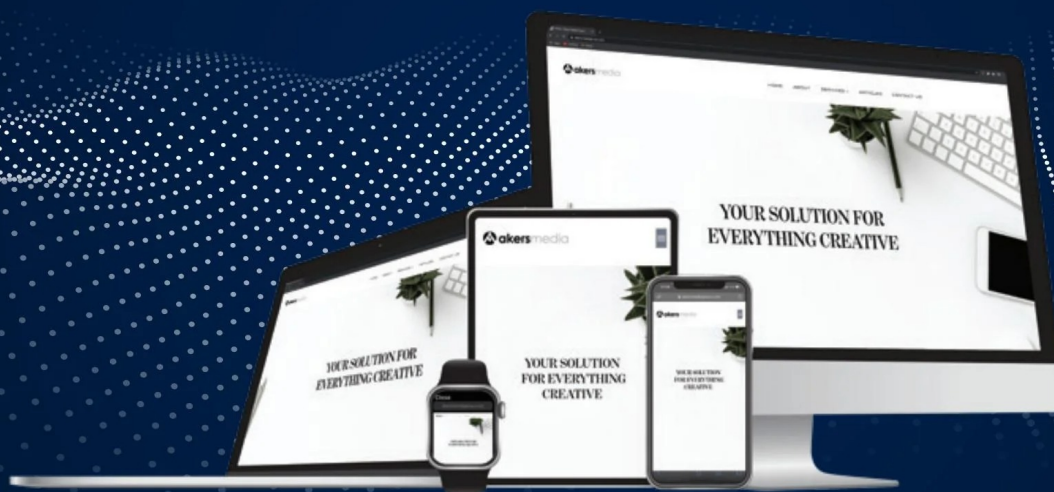


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Logan Carter, Tyler Rardin & Garrett Gilk



Gail Weidner & Paula Jordan



David Shaw, Tink DeVuyst & Kimmy Burr



Stump, Dobbie, Jim & Nancy



Carlos Nieto &
Shirley Dejesus

KEEP ON CRUISIN'

@ LEESBURG × PHOTOS: MATTHEW GAULIN

Gator Harley-Davidson roared into its 31st anniversary in February with a high-octane celebration at its iconic Leesburg location on US Hwy. 441. Guests enjoyed a thrilling bike show and sound competition by Elite Baggerz as well as customer appreciation giveaways and a fiery chili cook-off hosted by the Firefighter Charity of Central Florida. Hayfire lit up the stage from 12–4pm while attendees enjoyed cold beers and drinks from the full bar. The event sponsored by the Fran Haasch Law Group was a true biker's paradise. @

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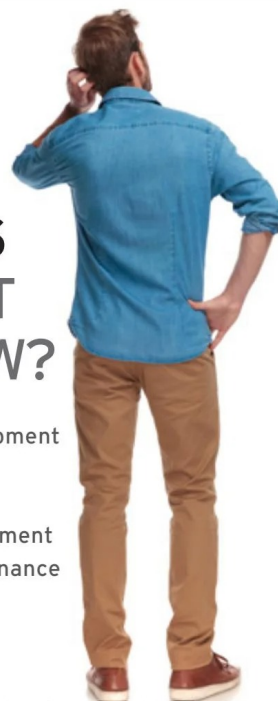
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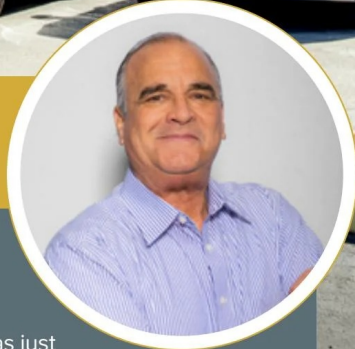
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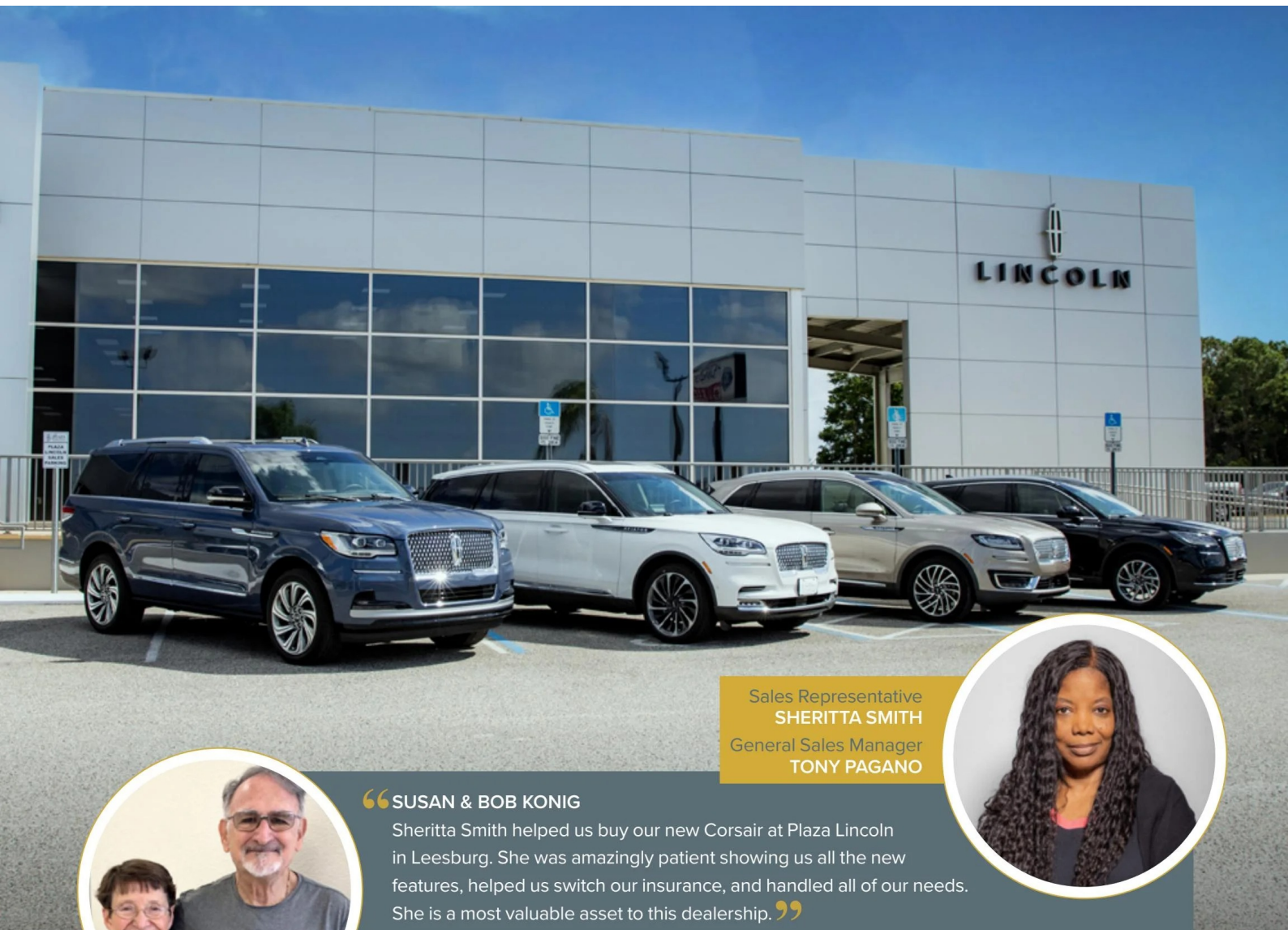
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PEOPLE

LUNA TABOAS

Montverde Academy shortstop leads with passion, power and pride.

STORY: KYLE COPPOLA X PHOTOS: PROVIDED



Montverde Academy shortstop Luna Taboas is more than a dominant force on the softball field; she's a leader and role model who's proud of her Puerto Rican and Argentinian roots.

Batting an incredible .605 over her career, the University of Georgia commit has built a reputation as one of the top prep players in the nation.

Her journey started at age 6 with a glove, a bat, and her father.

"My dad used to play baseball, and one day I told him I wanted to try softball. He looked at me like I was crazy," she says, laughing. "I picked up the bat and stood on the left side — I'm a natural righty — and hit. He said, 'Are you sure you feel comfortable doing that?' And I said, 'Yes it feels right.' From then on, I was a switch hitter for seven years before staying lefty."

Luna's father, Javier Taboas, remains her biggest inspiration. A former middle infielder himself, he taught Luna the fundamentals — footwork, focus and

mental strength — which led her to fall in love with playing shortstop.

"People say I'm his replica. He's always there for me, always lifting me up and putting in extra work with me, even on Sundays," she says. "Being at shortstop means I'm always in the game, and I get to be a leader on the field."

Her leadership shines brightly. Luna has grown both as an athlete and student.

"Montverde is like a family. Everyone knows each other's names. It's taught me how to connect with



Left: Photos provided by Montverde Academy Staff Photographer Kimberly Braden

Right: Photos provided by University of Georgia Softball

people, to be respectful and to grow as a leader," she says. "I've learned to take constructive criticism from my coaches, and now I'm captain of the team."

Her mental approach at the plate is as sharp as her numerous skills.

"When I'm in the box, I think, 'I'm better than this pitcher.' Softball is mostly mental," Luna says. "I have a 'Yes, Yes' mentality — if it's a strike, I'm swinging. If it's a ball, I watch it. I play aggressively and with confidence."

Luna isn't just making noise in the U.S.; she's already made a name for herself on the international stage, proudly representing Puerto Rico in the Pan American Games. She also had the chance to play in China with team Puerto Rico.

"Playing for Puerto Rico is one of my favorite things I've ever done," she says. "I want to play in the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles California — that's 100 percent a goal of mine."

Her cultural pride shines at Montverde's annual Diversity Camp.

"I remember going and bringing food from my Puerto Rican and Argentinian background," she says. "Everyone else also brought food from all over the world from different backgrounds. That experience brought everyone together. It was beautiful."

Luna's next chapter is only just beginning. She'll take her talents to the University of Georgia, where she also plans to study psychology and work toward her dream of helping others as a bilingual psychologist.

"Georgia always made me feel seen. They were watching me at my games, and when I visited, it just felt like home," she says. "I looked for red flags, and there weren't any. The coaches, the environment, the new facilities — everything was amazing."

Away from the diamond, Luna balances her 4.2 GPA with a packed

schedule that includes FCA, Pickleball Club, and time with her church community. Luna also loves watching movies and volunteering with senior citizens — especially those who suffer from Alzheimer's like her grandfather.

Her favorite athlete is MLB player and Montverde Academy graduate Francisco Lindor. "He never shows emotion on the field and is very intense. He also gives back. That's how I want to be — stay steady and never let your attitude bring your teammates down," she says. "I have always admired him for everything he does, for not only the school, but the community." With a gift of over

"NEVER LET YOUR MINDSET RUIN YOUR GAME. PLAY LIKE IT'S YOUR LAST MOMENT. STAY POSITIVE, BE GRATEFUL AND NEVER TAKE IT FOR GRANTED."

\$1 million from his MLB salary, Lindor helped bring Lindor Hall to life at Montverde Academy — a powerful symbol of his passion for education and giving back and a constant source of inspiration for Luna.

The youngest of four siblings, Luna also draws inspiration from family, especially older sister Martha Taboas, who played soccer for the Puerto Rico women's national team. "She was a huge reason I had such a drive to do sports. That goes for all my family members. I feel like they set me up for the success I am having," Luna says.

Montverde Academy Sports Information Manager Michael Damon

says, "Luna is an unbelievable person. The thing about her is, while she's great on the softball field, she's just as amazing a person off the field. She's respectful, kind and professional—just an all-around great person."

And Luna's advice to younger girls dreaming of playing at her level?

"Never let your mindset ruin your game. Play like it's your last moment. Stay positive, be grateful and never take it for granted. Sports can be taken away from you at any time due to a variety of things. Be the teammate others look up to. That is what I strive for every day." 



Know a talented student/athlete? Fill us in!

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KYLE COPPOLA

PEOPLE

KEYDRICK POWELL

Fueled by hard work and heart, this South Lake High senior is primed for breakout season.

STORY: KYLE COPPOLA × PHOTO: NICOLE HAMEL

Keydrick Powell is gearing up for a senior season to remember at South Lake High School, and if his off-season performance is any indicator, Lake County better take notice.

Keydrick's love for football runs deep. The South Lake standout first laced up his cleats in elementary school, playing little league ball and watching NFL greats like Odell Beckham, Jr. and Malik Nabers with wide eyes. "I fell in love with the game early," Keydrick says. "I always wanted to be out there, making plays."

His journey took a big turn during his sophomore year. Originally playing football in Texas, Powell's family relocated to Groveland, and for a short time, football took a back seat. That is, until one hallway interaction changed everything.

"As soon as I saw Keydrick in the hall between classes I knew he had to play," recalls South Lake Head Coach Brad Lord. "When we got Keydrick onto the field, he's one of the most talented players I've ever coached. His ball skills are elite, he's humble and he carries himself with a maturity that's rare for his age."

Keydrick answered the call—and made a

big impact. He's coming off a solid season with 500 receiving yards, and he's not satisfied. With his eyes on a massive 2025 campaign, Keydrick has been grinding through the off-season. He's been lighting up 7-on-7 tournaments and recently scored an eye-popping 14 touchdowns in a single tournament.

But beyond stat lines and highlight reels, Keydrick's heart is what makes him truly special. His biggest inspiration? His mom.

"My mom, Pamela Segura, means everything to me," Keydrick says. "She's my biggest supporter. No matter what, she helps me stay positive and focused. I wouldn't be where I am without her."

That sense of gratitude extends into his community life as well. When he's not training or studying film, Keydrick can be found volunteering at Living Hope Church in Clermont, where he's part of several outreach projects, including Habitat for Humanity.

"We recently painted a house, and being able to give back like that—it's powerful," he says. "There's no better feeling than helping a family in need."

Keydrick's impact has gone far beyond the field. He's proud to be a part of South Lake's resurgence. After years of rebuilding—including a 0-10 season that predates his arrival—the Eagles are on the rise.

"I wasn't here during that tough year in 2022, but I see how hard everyone has worked to turn this around," Keydrick says. "Last year we made the FHSAA playoffs and finished 7-4. This year? We want it all." 🏈

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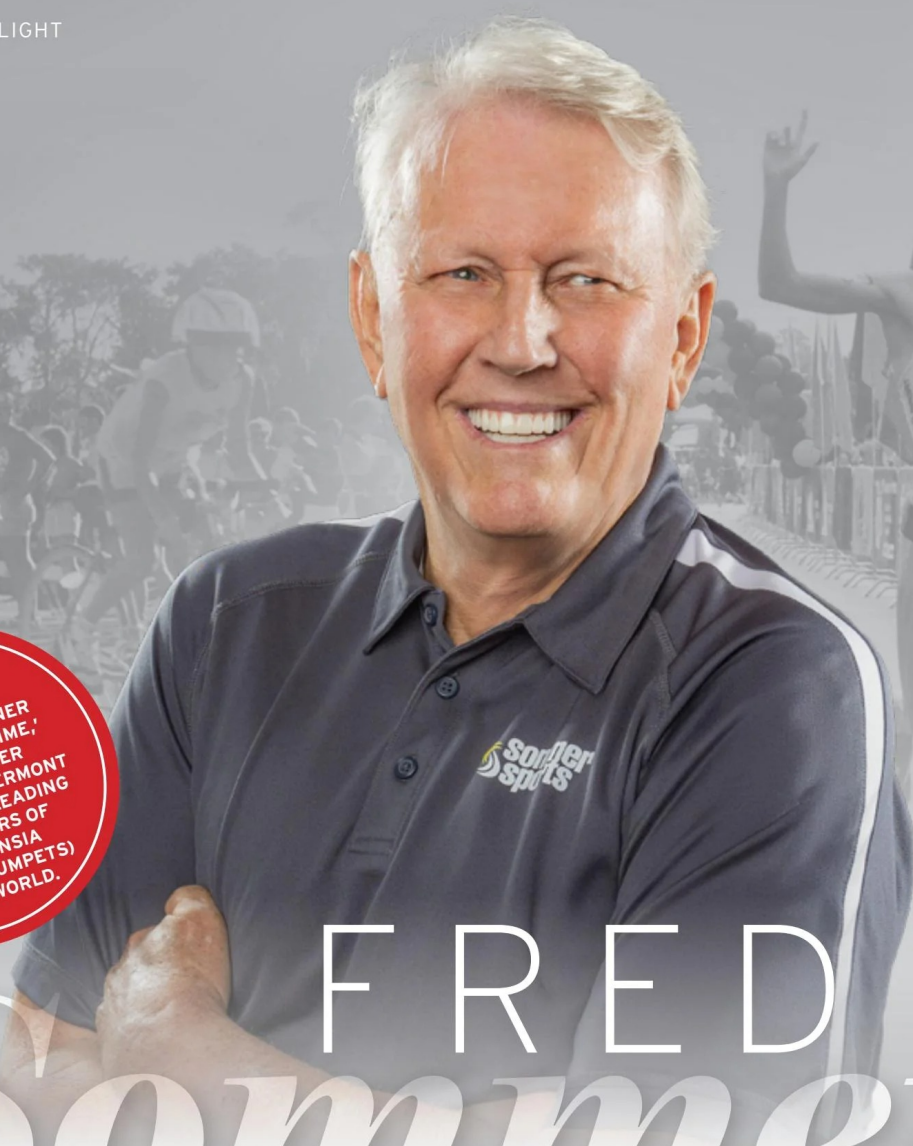
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FRED Sommer

Clermont native's four-decade journey transforming endurance sports—and his hometown.

STORY: KYLE COPPOLA AND ROXANNE BROWN × PHOTOS: NICOLE HAMEL

Fred Sommer has always loved his hometown. Raised in Clermont, where citrus groves once stretched as far as the eye could see, Fred's transformation from overweight high schooler to pioneering triathlon promoter is more than a personal evolution. It's the story of how one man's passion helped put Clermont on the map for endurance sports. "In high school, I used to be overweight. The coach would tease

me and say, 'If you come in behind Sommer, keep on running!'" Fred recalls. "I was always last to finish." That memory stuck with him—but it didn't hold him back. Fred started running regularly in college, laying the foundation for a lifelong passion. By 1984, he had launched Sommer Sports Events—a grassroots effort so he and his friends could race locally—that has since grown into one of the nation's most respected

multi-sport production and race timing companies. Today, Sommer Sports produces more than 40 events annually and has introduced thousands to triathlons, road races, trail runs and more. The company has hosted over 300 triathlons in Clermont alone, including marquee events like the USA Triathlon National Championships, the National Senior Games and the Special Olympics USA Games Triathlon. It also created the TriAmerica triathlon

tour and founded the Great Floridian Triathlon—the longest-running independent full-distance triathlon in the United States.

Still, organizing races has gotten tougher as the area keeps growing.

“We need roads and lakes to hold triathlons,” Fred says. “With so many new homes and developments, it’s becoming harder to find safe, open spaces.”

Even so, the rewards outweigh the obstacles. “One of the best parts of the job is seeing how many lives we’ve touched and changed,” Fred adds. “We’re now seeing third-generation athletes. Their parents raced with us and now their children are competing, too. It’s very special.”

Among the many notables who got their start in Clermont triathlons is four-time Olympian, triathlete Hunter Kemper. “Hunter was just a young guy when he started showing up to our events,” Fred says proudly. “Watching athletes like him grow and achieve greatness is inspiring.”

Fred credits the success of his company to the focus on participant experience and making each event unique and enjoyable. “It’s about keeping people happy and wanting to come back,” he says.

His staff, many of whom have been with him for years, are more like family than co-workers. Together, they manage a packed calendar of races.

But it’s not just elite athletes who benefit. Sommer Sports has become a platform for stories of transformation—people who began running to lose weight, cope with emotional struggles or simply find community.

The company has also partnered with the Special Olympics.

“We created a program with local coaches to accommodate Special Olympians,” Fred explains. “They compete in shorter distances, always accompanied by a guide and receive their own start times and awards. It’s been a wonderful thing for the community.”

Fred is working to ensure that the next generation of athletes, no matter their financial background, can experience the joy of endurance sports. Partnering with AdventHealth, he’s launching a new program offering loaner bikes and gear, as well as mentorship and encouragement from experienced racers and volunteers.

“We want to remove the barrier of cost,” Fred explains. “No child should miss out on this sport because they can’t afford a bike, a helmet, a pair of shoes—these things might seem basic, but for some families, they’re out of reach.”

Fred’s idea comes from a simple belief: endurance sports do more than just keep you healthy. They build confidence, teach discipline, and give kids a place where they feel they belong. “We’ve seen firsthand how participating in races changes lives. Kids who were once shy or struggling

in school start to find their voice and develop a sense of purpose,” he says.

The loaner bike program will work closely with local schools, youth organizations and coaches to identify children in need and provide them an opportunity.

Fred adds, “We want them to see themselves at that starting line, to feel like they belong there just as much as anyone else. Who knows? The next Olympian could be a kid who just needed someone to believe in them.”

Fred, now 70, shows no signs of slowing down. He recently launched a 24-hour trail race and continues to innovate with smaller, more accessible race formats. His energy and enthusiasm remain contagious and his efforts haven’t gone unnoticed.

In 2023, Fred was named USA Triathlon’s Director of the Year. Then, in early 2025, RunSignup honored him with the prestigious Alan Jones Timer of the Year Award.

Clermont didn’t become the “World Triathlon Destination,” attracting athletes from all 50 states and more than 35 countries, by accident. It took vision. It took grit. It took Fred Sommer.

“My advice is to follow your dreams,” he says. “You have to make sacrifices. There were years I went without an income because everything went into the business. But if you believe in what you’re doing, you can be successful.” 🏆



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RECIPE

Food Truck Frenzy

Lake Pointe culinary students take on real-world food truck challenge.

STORY AND PHOTOS: CINDY PETERSON

Lake Pointe Academy middle schoolers are getting a taste of the real world through a culinary challenge that turns them into food truck entrepreneurs.

The program, led by culinary instructor Shantelle Reeves, immerses culinary students in grades six through eight in a hands-on project where they simulate every aspect of running a restaurant on wheels. From writing business plans to budgeting, cooking and customer service, the students take on every responsibility themselves.

"We call it our food truck challenge," Shantelle says. "Each student becomes part of a team that forms their own company. They write business plans, pitch their ideas, and if they get funded, they build out their teams with roles like CEO, operations manager and marketing lead."

The project is built into Lake Pointe's beginning culinary classes, which are part of the Career and Technical Education Department of Lake County Schools. The curriculum follows CTE career standards that go well beyond basic cooking.

"We start the year focusing on food safety using the ServSafe curriculum, the same material

restaurant managers use to get certified," Shantelle says. "They learn about proper sanitation, cross-contamination, allergens and how to run a safe kitchen."

In the second half of the year, the hands-on projects kick in, which includes the food truck challenge, and the classroom transforms into a business incubator.

Each team designs a unique food truck concept, often giving it a theme or signature style. Before they can start cooking, students must pitch their business ideas to Shantelle, who acts as the funding agent. If she approves the plan, they're "funded" and begin setting up operations.

To prepare, students hear from a local entrepreneur who walks them through how to structure and write a business plan. Once approved, the real work begins.

"They have to plan their menu, calculate grocery costs and highlight the items they need," Shantelle says. "They keep a cash flow sheet, just like a real business, and track expenses every week. They also have to pay things like rent, a permit fee and we even bring in a real health inspector to review their kitchens."

Once their businesses are operational, students take weekly food orders from school staff using Google Forms. Teachers and staff can choose from that week's menu and receive their orders on Fridays, when the students prepare, package and deliver the meals.

"We had one week where teams sold 45 meals," Shantelle says. "That's a lot of cooking and organizing for kids this age. Last year, teachers didn't know what to expect, so we started smaller. But this year, the staff were asking for the meals from day one."

The deliveries are followed by a Yelp-style review system where teachers and staff rate the meals, offer suggestions and assign stars for presentation, taste and overall experience. Those reviews become instructional tools the students use to refine their businesses.



"EACH STUDENT BECOMES PART OF A TEAM THAT FORMS THEIR OWN COMPANY. THEY WRITE BUSINESS PLANS, PITCH THEIR IDEAS, AND IF THEY GET FUNDED, THEY BUILD OUT THEIR TEAMS WITH ROLES LIKE CEO, OPERATIONS MANAGER AND MARKETING LEAD."

— SHANTELL REEVES

"It's a huge learning moment," Shantelle says. "If an order doesn't get delivered, the students handle the customer service themselves. They figure out how to make it right."

Students are responsible for staffing their operations, managing kitchen efficiency and navigating the challenges of working together, which is a key learning objective for the course.

"One of the biggest things they're learning is how to properly collaborate and work as a team toward a common goal," Shantelle says. "They're also learning how to be employable, what's acceptable, what's not and how to adapt to different work environments."

Even pricing is determined by the teams, who decide how much to charge for each item and whether to offer premium add-ons.

"They're learning about upcharging too," she says. "Things like offering bakery-style cookies or drinks on the side. They're calling the shots and I'm just there to support and guide them."

While many students won't go on to become chefs, Shantelle hopes the challenge opens their eyes to a variety of career paths in the food and hospitality industry.

"I hope they see that there are jobs in food service that aren't just about being in the kitchen," she says. "There's marketing, management, logistics, so





many roles that use their strengths and don't require being the one cooking."

The Lake Pointe culinary program also includes a garden with eight raised beds that students maintain with the garden club that meets weekly. Herbs grown there are often incorporated into food truck meals or other aspects of the class.

Weekly labs have included recipes like Belgian waffles, boba tea, California rolls, cinnamon rolls and pasta dishes. As many as 125 students cook in a single day, which makes grocery costs substantial.

"When we do a lab, it can cost a lot of money, and it's through fundraising like

this that we're able to keep it going," Shantelle says.

Funding for the food truck project comes from the Education Foundation of Lake County, which provides grant money for groceries, packaging and equipment. All proceeds from food sales go back into the culinary program, helping sustain labs and future challenges.

To add excitement, Shantelle created a "bragging rights" trophy assembled from her daughter's old dance award, topped with a miniature food truck. The trophy goes to the team with the most profitable business at the end of the project.

The project will conclude with a culinary showcase event where students don chef coats and serve dinner to their families in the school cafeteria, a full-circle moment that celebrates not only what they cooked, but what they learned.

"It's such a proud moment," Shantelle says. "Last year the families were blown away by what the kids had done. These are skills they'll carry with them for the rest of their lives." 

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SPINACH MOZZARELLA AND FETA WHITE PIZZA

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced or grated
- 10 oz. fresh baby spinach or 1 bag frozen spinach (thawed and drained)
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/8 tsp. black pepper
- 1 log fresh mozzarella, sliced, or 1/2 cup shredded mozzarella
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta (per pizza)
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil, for drizzling
- 1/4 tsp. dried chili flakes
- 1 Woodfire pizza dough [see recipe >>](#)

DIRECTIONS:

Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic and sauté until lightly browned. Add spinach, cook until wilted, then season with salt and pepper. Remove from heat. Drizzle olive oil on pizza crust. Top with mozzarella, feta and cooked spinach. Sprinkle with red pepper flakes before baking.



Culinary Instructor Shantelle Reeves with students

WOODFIRE PIZZA DOUGH

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups warm water (100-110°F)
- 2 packets active dry yeast
- 2 Tbsp. honey
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups bread flour
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil (plus more for brushing)
- 1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt

DIRECTIONS:

In the bowl of a stand mixer, stir together warm water, yeast and honey. Let sit until foamy, about 5 minutes. Add both flours, olive oil and salt. Mix with dough hook on low speed for 1 minute. Increase to medium-low and mix until a dough ball forms and pulls from sides, about 5 minutes. If dough is sticky, add flour as needed. Press with your finger – if it springs back, it's ready. Shape into a ball, place in a lightly oiled bowl and cover. Let rise 1 hour or refrigerate for up to 2 days. Once doubled, punch down and divide into 2 pieces. Shape into 12" circles on floured surface, forming a thicker edge. Place on parchment-lined baking sheet or pizza peel dusted with cornmeal. Brush edges with olive oil, top as desired. Bake at 450°F for 12-15 minutes in regular oven or 3 minutes at 700°F in woodfire oven.

**Use a wooden spoon and knead by hand if no stand mixer is available.*



Hey, readers! Do you have favorite recipes or know a chef we should profile?

→ Comment on this article or send story ideas to cindy@akersmediagroup.com.



CINDY PETERSON



REVIEW

So Cheesy

The Humble Native proudly serves the Florida spirit.

STORY: GINA HORAN • PHOTOS: NICOLE HAMEL

It's hard to stay humble when you're a seventh-generation Sumter Countian serving the best grilled cheese in town, but Cheyenne Davies displays modesty with a southern breeze.

As the proud owner of The Humble Native in Wildwood she's curated a Florida-themed café and marketplace established with heritage and humility that melts your heart like the sandwiches melt in your mouth.

"When Sumter County was founded in 1853, my family settled Adamsville and my maiden name is Adams," she says. "We're deeply rooted here."

Cheyenne spent a decade in the medical field before realizing she

needed something more fulfilling. "I wanted something that would serve my family in a deeper way," she says.

She opened Humble-Potamus Children's Boutique in June 2023, and less than a year later, The Humble Native was born.

"It's about intention," Cheyenne says. "It's about family, community and love of my home state."

Her family legacy is everywhere in the lovingly restored 1920s house. Florida pride surrounds you the second you walk through the door: The gift shop is lined with local hot sauces, locally made gifts like jewelry and candles next to shelves of quirky home goods. Pink flamingo wallpaper covers the back wall behind the Yoder's Ice Cream, which is made in Sarasota.

"The food part wasn't the original plan," Cheyenne says. "We just wanted to scoop some ice cream to complement our kids' boutique, but Tallahassee had other plans as there is a state law that requires a full restaurant license to do that."

Instead of giving up, Cheyenne leaned in.

"We wanted something that tasted like comfort food, so I started with soup and salad and a panini press," she says. "Then we went through the recipes and I doubled (or tripled) the cheese and it just worked."

For me, the charm starts on the porch, where bright pink wooden chairs sit beside native Florida plants and a rack of locally sourced kids' clothes. Just inside, we heard the

unmistakable sound of a local bluebird tapping frantically at the back window.

"I need to order a blow-up owl or that poor thing is going to peck himself silly," Cheyenne laughed. Welcome to Florida.

Aside from bird duty, Cheyenne was poised to cook, and with help from her family, she designed a menu of Florida-inspired melts that read like gooey love letters.

Our chief photographer Nicole and I chose three styles of sandwich: The Cracker Cuban, The Florida Roadkill and the Don't NY My FL, with a side of their trademark tomato soup.

The Cracker Cuban is a Florida twist on the classic, using shredded, smoked pork instead of the usual pressed loin, and layered with pickle, Black Forest

ham and their signature mustard sauce. It all comes together in your mouth instead of falling apart down your chin like most Cubans do.

Don't NY My FL is Cheyenne's favorite and a playful nod to transplants, with pepperoni, pesto, bruschetta and mozzarella in a pizza melt that screams Italian-American.

The star by far—and soon to have its own billboard on Highway 301—is the wildly popular "Florida Roadkill." It's got roasted turkey, bacon crumbles and sharp cheddar cheese, already enough to satisfy any grilled cheese groupie. But then she adds local orange marmalade on golden sourdough to lend a combination of salty, sweet and just the right amount of sticky.

"It's worth the pain," Cheyenne says, showing me where the hot jam singed her finger as it oozed out of the press.

Other standouts include It's Not the Heat, with candied jalapeños, cream cheese, bacon and cheddar. Highfalutin gets fancy with goat cheese, pepper jelly and bacon. Oh Look, Cows brings brisket, provolone, Swiss, horseradish and pickled onions. Sassy Snowbird mixes shredded chicken, buffalo sauce, ranch and cheddar.

Sunshine State stacks American, cheddar and provolone for the purists. Smoke Show comes loaded with smoked pork, blackberry BBQ sauce, fried onions and cheddar. There's also the Southern Belle with pimento cheese, tomato and bacon, and the Tree Hugger for plant-based diners with dairy-free cheese and bruschetta.

There are also kid-friendly grilled cheeses, "char-kid-erie" boxes and gluten-free or keto bread options. You can sip on crafted lattes, dirty sodas or try a seasonal soup flight on cooler days. There are a multitude of Yoder's ice cream flavors like Gator Trail, Key Lime Pie and Siesta Sea Turtle and I was very grateful for my lactose tolerance.

As I left, still licking the marmalade off my fingers, I said something to Nicole I never thought I would. "I can't wait for another mouthful of Florida Roadkill." She agreed, and since it's already on my commute, I'm plotting my return. 🍷



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GINA HORAN

local eats

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352.243.8988

Cheeser's Palace Café
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352.404.9431

Crooked Spoon Gastropub
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352.404.7808

Gator's Dockside
1200 Oakley Seaver Dr.
352.242.1825

Goomba's Pizzeria
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352.989.4403

Lakeridge Winery & Vineyards
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352.394.8627

Oak Wood Smokehouse & Grill
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352.394.0036

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Fish Camp on Lake Eustis serves up new ownership with time-honored service and flavor.

New owners Marc and Lee-Ann Petitpas and seasoned chef Troy Howard are carrying on the legacy that made Fish Camp on Lake Eustis a local legend. The menu celebrates Central Florida cuisine with bold flavors and farm-to-table ingredients in dishes like the blackened grouper Reuben, mangrove snapper, Florida grass-fed burgers and a keto Mahi that satisfies even the hungriest seafood lover. Guests sip #DrinkLocal cocktails while enjoying live music, lake views and a relaxed atmosphere. Fish Camp recently won the Best Service award from Restaurant Guru, was named TripAdvisor's 2024 Best of the Best and was listed among the top 25 quintessential Florida restaurants by the Orlando Sentinel. With the tagline "Eat Fish/Live Forever," Fish Camp is family friendly, dog friendly and always welcoming.

→ **Fish Camp on Lake Eustis** / 901 Lake Shore Blvd., Tavares / 352.742.4400
fishcamponlakeeustis.com / Sun-Thurs 11am-8pm, Fri-Sat 11am-9pm

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Brooklyn's Pizzeria & Italian Restaurant

27405 US HWY 27, LEESBURG | 352.728.2020
MYBROOKLYNPIZZERIA.COM

James & Shawna Pancari set out to create an authentic pizzeria reminiscent of those James grew up with in Brooklyn, New York. Together, they've built a loyal following of "pizza snobs" who keep coming back for more! From the moment you walk in, you're immersed in a friendly, inviting atmosphere, with the irresistible aroma of fresh Italian flavors setting the stage for an unforgettable dining experience.

Their commitment to quality is evident in every bite, from hand-tossed, scratch-made dough to freshly sliced veggies and house-made sauces. Each dish is crafted with care and served with pride. Beyond their signature New York-style pizza, the menu boasts a delicious variety of Italian specialties, such as calzones, strombolis, Italian entrées, and appetizers, plus signature sandwiches, salads, wings, and desserts. A well-curated beer and wine selection complements every meal, and gluten-free options ensure there's something for everyone. Stop by for a true taste of Italy—you won't be disappointed!

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352.241.9884 | GURURESTAURANTCLERMONT.COM

Owned by Chef Uday Kadam, Guru has a following of fans who savor the delicious, award-winning Indian cuisine inside the restaurant's beautiful dining room filled with Indian décor and tables with linen tablecloths. Guru earned the prestigious Best Entrée award at the 2021 Taste of South Lake & Business Expo for its Chicken Tikka Masala, featuring boneless chicken pieces cooked in a Tandoor oven with tomato sauce, onion, aromatic herbs, spices, and served with Basmati rice. Guru also has tasty appetizers, Naan breads, vegan dishes, and a wide array of entrees, including Palak Paneer, a dish of homemade cubes of cheese cooked with spinach and fresh spices; Lamb Vindaloo of choice lamb cubes marinated in vinegar with potato and a blend of spices; and Tandoori Chicken Tikka, where the chicken is marinated in mild spices and yogurt. Additionally, Indian alcoholic beverages of Taj Mahal and Kingfisher are served at Guru, and the restaurant caters private functions, parties, and provides many delivery options for orders made online at mygurutogo.com.

Mon - Sat
11:30am - 10:00pm

Sunday
11:30am - 7:00pm



La Palma Mexican Grill

1690 CITRUS BLVD., LEESBURG | 352.323.1444 | LAPALMAGRILL.COM

The entire staff invites you to a delicious dining experience at La Palma Mexican Grill. The recipes used for the restaurant's unique dishes are a blend of old-school traditions from Mexico, combined with culinary inspirations from California and Louisiana. Homemade Mexican entrees such as Tacos Azteca, carnitas, fajitas, Chori Pollo, tamales and more, are flavorful and prepared with only the freshest of ingredients. Sit comfortably in the beautiful dining room, the festive bar, or outside on the patio deck with a serene view of the grounds and of the fun wild animals that can be spotted in the trees. Enjoy fast and friendly service, reasonable prices, three-for-one margaritas all day, every day, and a party room, available by reservation, for large parties or meetings. Full menu at lapalmagrill.com. Call for daily specials.

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Rodello's Italian Restaurant

26736 U.S. HIGHWAY 27, LEESBURG | 352.319.8093 | RODELLOS.COM

Chef Amadeo Avila invites you to enjoy authentic and fresh Italian cuisine in a friendly, comfortable dining environment at Rodello's Italian Restaurant. The recipes used for his dishes are a blend of old-school traditions from Italy—the restaurant is named for a city in the old country—with new culinary inspirations that Chef Amadeo has learned during many years in the restaurant business. Flavorful, homemade Italian entrees such as Pistachio Crusted Lamb, Salmon Saltimbocca, Lobster Ravioli, Shrimp Risotto, and many others are classics and prepared with only the freshest ingredients. The lunch menu features personal pizzas, calzones, subs, and pasta. Sit in the spacious dining room or enjoy drinks or desserts like delicious gelato in the cozy lounge, which features a full bar, wine menu, and an array of specialty cocktails. Always look for new features on Chef Amadeo's menu, available on the restaurant's website, Rodellos.com.

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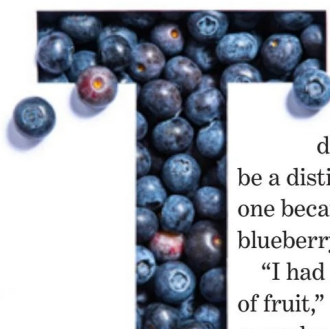


PEOPLE

BLUEBERRY STILL

Yalaha farmer Doug McCormack distilled a fruit surplus into bottles of bootlegging gold.

STORY: GINA HORAN × PHOTO: NICOLE HAMEL



Third-generation Florida farmer Doug McCormack didn't set out to be a distiller; he became one because he had a blueberry problem.

"I had an overabundance of fruit," he says. "A few years back, a buddy of mine knew how to make wine, so we pooled our resources and produced some great results."

That backyard experiment led to Yalaha Bootlegging Company, where Doug now makes small-batch spirits perfectly distilled from organic blueberries and cane sugar on his family farm in Lake County.

"First, we had to apply for a license and quickly figured out that the antiquated laws discriminated against distillers," Doug says. "For example, we could only sell one bottle at a time per year per customer, which was ridiculous."

He pled his case in Tallahassee, testifying before the Ways and Means Committee, which helped push through changes allowing distilleries to sell one bottle per variety. That loophole sparked a creative explosion and opened the door to new ideas.

Doug's first creation at the distillery running on spring water

drawn from 320 feet down? A bold 100-proof blueberry moonshine.

"I thought, 'Great, let's make more varieties,'" he says. "We added peach, apple, watermelon and pecan, then just kept building. Now we have multiple flavors and proofs."

After a pandemic boom, Doug used the extra income to upgrade to a larger still, which he aptly named "O-Jesus," after literally exclaiming "Oh Jesus" the first time he laid eyes on the bespoke beauty.

Visitors come from all over, including locals, U-pickers and road-tripping Villagers, all looking to sample Florida-grown spirits and hang out in the rustic tasting room. Doug is usually on hand to pour samples, and the gift shop features

DOUG IS BEHIND THE JUG MOST DAYS AND HE'LL GLADLY GIVE YOU A SAMPLE AND SHOW YOU HIS STILL!



ceramic "Crazy Jugs" made by his brother Tim and sister-in-law Sandi. There are also house-jarred pickles and gator jerky available.

"I love sharing what we do here," Doug says. "This whole operation is a family affair and we're proud of every batch." @

8222 CR 48, Yalaha / 352.324.4069
yalahabootleggingco.com / crazyjugs.com



REDNECK MASON JAR MARGARITA

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 oz. clear, fruity Yalaha Bootlegging Co. "SHINE"
- 1 oz. watermelon or strawberry puree
- 1 oz. pure lemon juice
- 1/2 oz. simple syrup
- 7 oz. still or sparkling water

DIRECTIONS:

Shake SHINE, puree, juice and syrup and pour over ice. Add fruits and top with water. Garnish with basil or mint.

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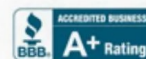
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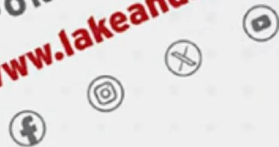
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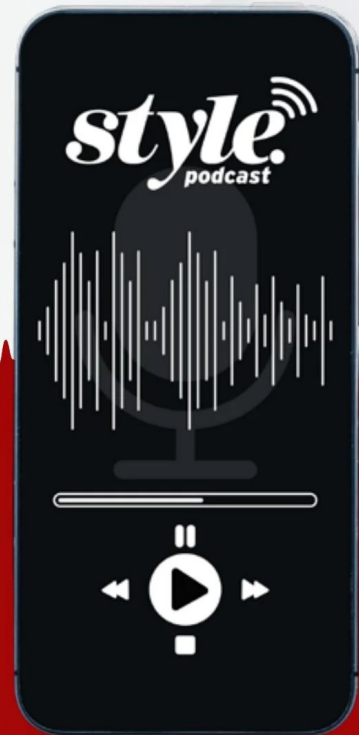
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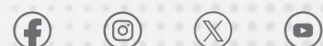
Gina Horan

Gina is a seasoned media professional who brings a wealth of experience and a dynamic perspective to The Healthy Living Podcast and the Style team. Passionate about connecting with local experts and sharing their insights, she engages Central Florida audiences with an educated and holistic approach to body, mind, spirit, and finance.



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OFFERED AT: **\$389,900**

3

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1,599
Sq.Ft.



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OFFERED AT: **\$399,900**

4

2

2,242
Sq.Ft.



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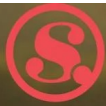
OFFERED AT: **\$715,000**

4

3

2,742
Sq.Ft.





BLOWING IN THE BREEZE

Amid fluttering fabric and birdsong, a simple chore becomes a timeless bond.

STORY: CYNTHIA MCFARLAND

Laundry is my all-time favorite domestic chore for one simple reason: I hang it outdoors to dry.

Growing up in the desert southwest, I always helped my mom hang laundry on the line.

In that sunny, arid climate, the first items were already drying by the time we finished hanging everything.

Since leaving

Arizona as an adult, I've always had a clothesline wherever I lived. It never occurred to me that this choice was eco-conscious, but apparently, using a clothesline now earns points for helping "save the planet."

Although drying clothes outside is common around the globe, in America the vast majority of people opt for dryers over clotheslines.

Many communities even have regulations that restrict

outdoor clotheslines, despite their energy-saving merits. One friend told me her HOA doesn't allow them because they look "tacky." Ouch.

Given that I live in the country and my clothesline borders the pasture nearest the house, this routine chore comes with built-in scenery. I'm often treated to visits from deer and other wildlife who have grown accustomed to my presence. There are almost always birds singing, and depending on the season, an ariel parade of butterflies.

I doubt hanging out laundry would be as rewarding in an urban setting, never mind those cool photos of narrow Italian streets with laundry hanging on lines strung above the road from building to building.

The hanging out part is my favorite, but there's also the satisfaction of taking down, folding and placing each item in the laundry basket.

I never owned a dryer until I bought my current home, which came with

one. I use it on rare occasions, but no dryer sheet can genuinely replicate the scent of fresh air and sunshine, even when it's euphemistically labeled "Summer Breeze" or "Mountain Air."

My mom insisted on having a clothesline until she moved to assisted living. I inherited the last of her clothespins, which fell apart over the years, but a single faded yellow one remains. I don't want it to break, so I don't use it anymore, I just keep it clipped on the end of the first line.

Mom has been gone six years this June, but every time I hang out a load, I see that clothespin and think of her. It's not just the scent of sun-dried laundry I appreciate, but that she also cherished this simplest of chores. ☹️



Hey, readers! Is there a particular subject that you would like me to write a commentary about? → Tell me, via email, at editorial@akersmediagroup.com.



CYNTHIA MCFARLAND



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Ali Zarezadeh, MD

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